

# BEIJING TODAY

价四折低

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Finding art in  
every eave

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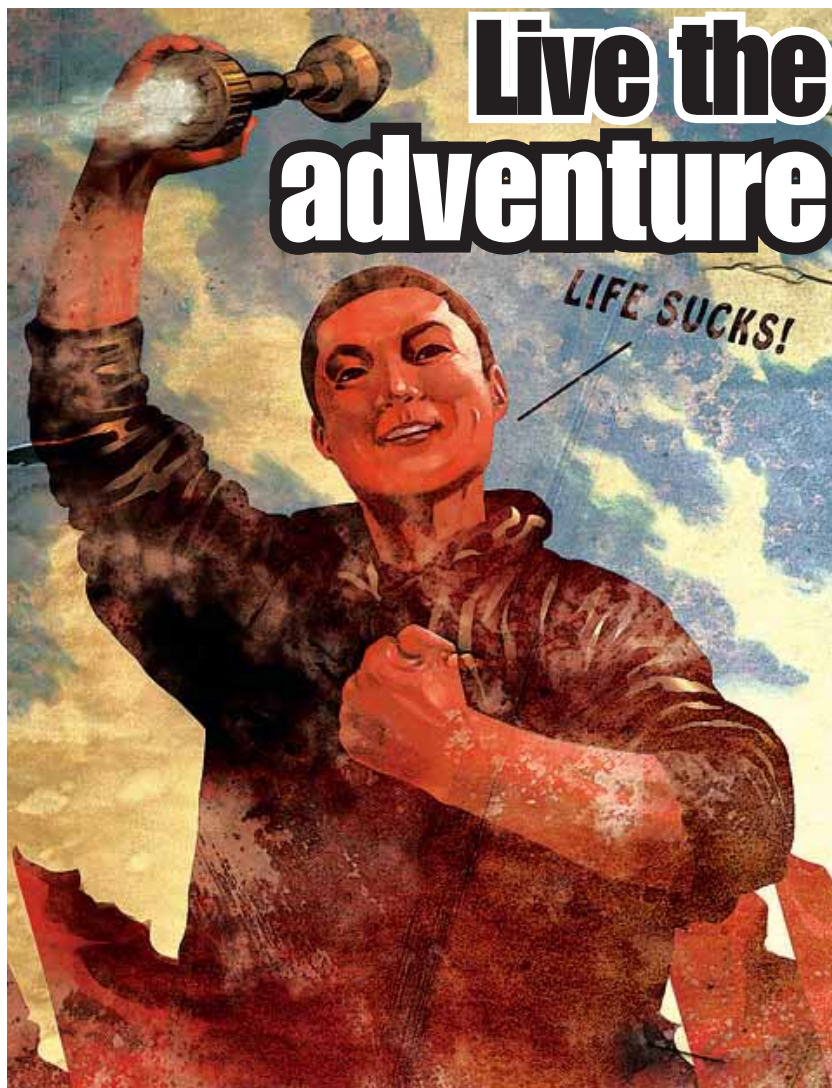
Medicine from  
the mountains

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Meet the new  
green dog

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One look at Li Yang, creator of the 20-minute animated Adventure of Li Xianji, is all it takes to know this tale of video games, love and bin Laden is real. But Li - a self-proclaimed "loser" - is loathe to cash in on his newfound success with the 1980s generation. For some artists, change is pain.

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**HOT POT!**

**CHINESE  
RESTAURANT**

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# Heavy snows overwhelm gov's cleanup efforts



That classes were closed came as a shock.

"With the capital blanketed in heavy snow, the temperature in Beijing is expected to hit the lowest in half a century with a low of -16 C," Guo Hu, head of the Beijing meteorological bureau, said Tuesday.

To combat chaos on the road, the educational department suspended classes because of bad weather for the first time. As many as 3,500 primary and high schools in Beijing and Tianjin sent their 2.2 million students home.

"I was quite surprised to hear classes will be suspended because it is very rare. As far as I remember, we only did it during the SARS crisis in 2003," Sun Hongtao, a teacher at Beijing Wanshou Primary School, said.

Zhang Zhiqiang, a Beijing Environment and Sanitation Engineering Group official in charge of road cleanup, said 960 workers and 193 snow-clearing vehicles were deployed 12 hours a day for five days to keep traffic flowing. City roads were salted with 2,175 tons of thawing agents.

But heavy snow still shut down expressways, delayed flights and disrupted bus service. The snow forced full or partial closure of airports in Beijing, Tianjin, Hohhot and Dalian, leav-

By Chu Meng

Though snow is no longer falling on Beijing and other northern cities, the severe temperatures it brought will persist for another week. This week, the city recorded its lowest temperatures and greatest snowfall since 1952, according to data from the city's meteorological bureau.



Severe weather is making travel dangerous. Armed police were called in to excavate this train buried en route from Harbin to Baotou on Sunday.

CFP Photos

ing passengers stranded. Most flights at Beijing Capital International Airport, the country's busiest, were cancelled or severely delayed, with only one of the three runways open at one point.

Extreme temperatures also shut down the airport express line, which was not equipped with weather protection. At Dongzhimen Station, the starting point of the one-year-old line, only three trains departed between 6 and 9 am Monday, leaving thousands stuck in the station and missing their flights.

On the road, snow slowed

cars to less than 30 kilometers per hour on the once bustling airport expressway. Many of the expressways connecting Beijing with other cities were shut down or had restricted access.

On Tuesday afternoon, after being jammed for two days and two nights due to poor visibility on Badaling expressway, over 1,000 trucks were allowed to drive on.

"The snow on expressway was deeper than 30 centimeters. The visibility was less than 10 meters even during the daytime," Li Guoyong, one of the

drivers, said.

Trucks with vegetables, meat, milk and coal from Hebei, Shanxi and Inner Mongolia were blocked here, cutting off the supply of goods to the city.

The northern part of Badaling expressway remained jammed Wednesday due to snow and ice.

Prices of vegetables at the Xinfadi Farm Product Wholesale Market, Beijing's biggest, returned to normal Wednesday.

"We have a lot we need to improve to cope with severe weather," Zhang Yuxi, the manager of the market, said.

## Flu vaccine safe for pregnant women

By Han Manman

Contrary to previous reports, the government is encouraging pregnant women to receive the A/H1N1 flu vaccine as the virus' death toll climbs.

On January 2, the mainland reported 120,000 cases of H1N1 flu resulting in 659 deaths. Liang Wannian, director of the health ministry's emergency response office, said this week that 14 percent of those killed were pregnant women in.

While the weekly number of reported new cases dipped, the number of serious cases and deaths jerked upward, he said.

The latest death last week, when a 25-year-old woman pregnant with triplets perished in Qingdao.

National health experts said pregnant women are more susceptible to the virus and said some die from its complications.

Pregnant women were previously discouraged from receiving the vaccine as experts feared it could induce a miscarriage or birth defects.

But government experts declared the vaccines safe for pregnant women last month, citing new research of its risks and the World Health Organization's (WHO) successful experience in handling similar cases.

The WHO lists pregnant women as a priority for receiving the A/H1N1 vaccination in the US and Hong Kong.

More than 1,400 pregnant women were inoculated by the end of 2009, Liang said.

"None of them showed serious adverse reactions," he said. "It proved the vaccine is safe for pregnant women."

Zhao Tao, an official from the Municipal Health Bureau, said pregnant women in Beijing can be vaccinated voluntarily at 402 designated hospitals and health centers starting next week.

This week, the Beijing Center for Disease Control (CDC) warned a new wave of infection may begin with Spring Festival, when an estimated 10 million travelers move to and from the capital.

Crowded conditions combined with a large unvaccinated population will boost infection rates, Pang Xinghuo, deputy director of the Beijing CDC, said.

"These people might become infected elsewhere and bring the virus back to Beijing after the festival to start a new round of infections," she said.

## Officials gamble on Hainan's appeal

By Chu Meng

Hainan Province will introduce international sports and entertainment activities and promote its sports lottery and gambling. The island may become the country's first trial base for a legal gambling industry.

The province may be the next top destination for international tourism if the government's plans for 2020 succeed. The government confirmed Monday it intends to boost the island's overall development by offering duty-free services modeled on Hong Kong, improved transportation and more information networks and infrastructure.

"If we don't introduce gambling in Hainan, it would be missing something characteristic of international tourism destinations," Luo Youming, the provincial governor, said at a press conference. But while its desig-



The island's rich natural tourism resources make it the perfect international sight-seeing destination.

CFP Photo

nation as a trial base may give it room to experiment, the governor said Hainan would not violate existing laws which forbid illegal gambling.

"There are misunderstandings among people about the

development of the lottery industry in Hainan."

But Liu Deqian, vice director of tourism and recreation research at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences' Institute of Finance, said Wednesday that

the social function of gambling is largely misunderstood. The sports lottery exists to raise money necessary to promote sporting developments in China — not vice, he said.

The sports lottery would be only one form of gambling. Other options may include gambling on horse races and international sporting events. The future of gambling on the island is inextricably linked to what Chinese society at large considers socially acceptable, and it is only one component of the island's touristic value, he said.

Further plans include extending the existing visa-free arrival policy to five other nations: Finland, Denmark, Norway, Ukraine and Kazakhstan. Persons from 21 nations, including the US, Japan and Canada, are currently allowed to enter the island without a Chinese visa.

# Student's thesis explores value of the housewife

By Zhang Dongya

Housewives are rarely equated with career women, but Gong Jing, 21, a senior at Hubei University of Economics, said that may be a mistake.

"As far as professions go, the full-time housewife is one of the most important. Even if they stay at home, they juggle as many as 10 roles like babysitter, psychological consultant, financial consultant and nutritionist. They generate a labor value worth 9,600 yuan per month according to present wage levels in Wuhan," Gong said.

Gong's argument comes from her thesis, "Study on Social Value of Full-time Housewife's Work."

The paper took third prize among scientific and technological works by students in Hubei Province last December. Judges praised it for its novel viewpoint and distinctive methodology.

Media coverage of her study has many rethinking the full-time position.

Gong said many take the woman's job of housework and child rearing for granted, but that it is a biased assumption.

Her calculation of a housewife's value was based on adding the total salaries of the 10 occupations she fulfills: at least 1,200 yuan for a babysitter, 600 yuan for an accountant, 1,000 yuan for

a secretary, 800 yuan for a nutritionist and 600 yuan for a psychologist.

If housewife is an occupation, then the husband is her boss. But this puts women in a subordinate position in the family.

The topic was inspired by her own family's experience. Gong's mother gave up her job to take care of the family when she was in senior high school. But it was a decision that brought much criticism from the family's neighbors.

Gong surveyed 300 people from eight communities in Wuhan and interviewed dozens of full-time housewives. Many women who chose to become

housewives came from an advanced educational background and were strong performers at their jobs. Most left their careers shortly after their pregnancy.

While the paper intended to show the economic value of the housewife, she said women who stay home elect to take many risks.

"Housewives in China face more difficulties than those in the West, where more social activities are available. Many housewives I know become socially isolated after leaving the workforce," Hou Wen, a physiological consultant in Beijing, said.

The long-term separation from new knowledge and techniques leaves many ill equipped to seek re-employment, she said.

Since the 1950s, Chinese women have been playing an important part in the national workforce best illustrated by the saying "Women hold up half the sky." But after work, many are still expected to fulfill the traditional roles of the housewife.

In some areas, such as Wenzhou, Zhejiang Province, the men who take on family duties hope their wives can stay at home. But in cities like Beijing and Shanghai, housewives face extreme social pressures.

## Villagers challenge the sky with new building



Huaxi Village will invest 6 billion yuan (\$878 million) to build a 118-floor and 538-meter high building in the next 12 years to celebrate its 60th anniversary in 2021, the *Guangzhou Daily* reported yesterday.

According to previous reports, a 74-story skyscraper, the eighth highest building in China and the world's 15th highest, is expected to reach 328 meters upon completion this June.

Costing more than 1.5 billion yuan, the mega-building is scheduled to go into operation in 2011 to mark the 50th anniversary of the founding of the village.

"High-rises save land resources and we have the money," Wu Xie'en, the village chief, said. "The 118-floor building will cost us 250 million yuan per year to maintain, and that is not a big deal for us," he said.

Huaxi Village in Jiangsu Province is possibly the richest village. In the 1960s the village was in poverty. But that changed in 1999 when the village turned itself into a rural economic powerhouse.

The current annual sales income of the village is above 40 billion yuan. It remains one of the most successful examples of rural reform.

(By Han Mamman)

The new skyscraper being built in Huaxi Village, Jiangsu Province, is already 250 meter tall. It is scheduled for completion this June.

Photo by Du Anna

## Students prove labor abuse in Disney factories

By Zhao Hongyi

University students recently investigated and broke a story online about safety, environmental and labor abuses by factories working for Disney in the Pearl River Delta.

For many, these concerns are magnified because of the government's recent approval of the media giant's plans to build a new Disneyland in Pudong, Shanghai.

Six students from universities in Jiangxi and Shandong provinces began their investigation after hearing that a teenage boy died in a Disney factory in 2008. Their original plan was to investigate the work environment only.

Last summer holiday, the students posed as migrant workers and found work at several factories Disney contracted in Shenzhen and Dongguan. They were given no contracts, no training and the companies made none of the required payments to their social insurance.

Students reported witnessing five major injuries at the plants during the first month. Injured workers received no medical attention and were put back to work on the line, the students reported.

Wu Tao, one of the six students, said many workers in the factory had visible skin ailments caused by contact with unknown chemical.

Wang Hai, another student, worked in a factory where strong fumes evaporated constantly from a potent mixture of six chemicals. "There were no masks, gloves or any kind of protective gear," he said.

Dong Jing, the only woman in the group, said her factory was adorned with rotting wires and loose sockets, which broke off from time to time.

"Many workers have no social insurance," the students' joint report, released in late December, said. "The boss told workers he has made the appropriate payments to their social insurance, but not one worker had ever been

issued a card."

All the workers, including the students, were paid late or never at all.

"The Disney contracts were worth \$1.9 billion (12 billion yuan)," the students said. "But the factory workers suffer heavily."

Yaohua Papers and Stationeries Factory and Canfine [sic?] Toys in Dongguan denied the accusations. An official from Hongbo Sportswear said Disney had inspected and approved its facilities in 2009.

Tao Xianjin, manager of Victory Link Arts & Jewelry in Dongguan, said his factory stopped producing for Disney two years ago, contrary to the student report.

"Of course we have to use strong chemicals. Our factory is doing electroplating," Tao said. "We reported the chemicals were using to the local government, and it said we met all the safety requirements."

Disney's Shanghai office said it was "aware of the students' accusations and that it has sent its own inspectors to follow up."

But the students said Disney is denying knowledge to shift the blame and dodge fines.

"We have more evidence proving the factories dodged government inspections and cheated surprise inspectors," Wu Tao said.

The students were not the first grassroots group to investigate factories contracted by big multinationals.

In 1996, an NGO from Hong Kong investigated factories supplying Wal-Mart. Other investigations have exposed abuses in factories employed by Apple, Nike, GAP, Coca-Cola and Foxconn.

"These reports are essential to ensuring that rights of Chinese workers are protected," Ye Chuanlong, a market observer, said. "The government needs to take responsibility and ensure factories cannot get away with such abuses."



# 106,000 officials face justice for crimes in 2009



(From the left) Pi Qiansheng, Zhu Zhigang, Zheng Shaocong and Xu Zongheng were high level officials penalized last year for corruption.

CFP Photo

A total of 106,626 officials were penalized for violations from January to November last year, an official with the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Commission for Discipline Inspection (CCDI) said Thursday.

Gan Yisheng, vice secretary of the CCDI, said 80 percent of the received punishments were handed down by the CPC; the rest were penalized by the government.

Those punished included Party members, government workers or leaders and the leaders of state-owned enterprises.

About 2.6 percent of those punished by the CPC were

expelled from the Party and charged with embezzlement or bribery, Gan said.

Of the almost 14,000 commercial corruption cases investigated and handled by disciplinary and supervisory groups, about 21 percent involved civil servants.

A total of 3,743 leaders at county level or above were punished and 20 percent were referred for prosecution.

Investigations into a series of accidents involving serious consequences led to the identification of 298 corrupt officials.

Gan said inspectors received almost 1.32 million petitions and tips during the 11 months,

11 percent of which were tentatively verified and 8.75 percent placed on file for investigation and prosecution.

Authorities focused on cases concerning violations of the CPC Central Committee's major decisions, such as the economic stimulus package, protection of cultivated land and conservation of resources, Gan said.

Focus was also put on violations in key areas such as construction, real estate, land and mineral resource exploitation, state-owned assets and finance.

Party or government bodies and public institutions who were also scrutinized set up or used "private coffers."

## Related

### Senior Chinese official urges stepped-up anti-graft efforts

China's anti-graft chief He Guoqiang called Monday for the discipline inspection agencies dispatched by the Central Commission for Discipline Inspection to fight corruption.

The agencies must strengthen their supervision of the leaders of relevant units, further investigate cases of dereliction, bribery and abuse of power and focus on cases leading to mass incidents and other serious ones, He, head of the commission, said.

The CCDI agencies played an important role in the fight against corruption in 2009, said He, a member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee.

Despite the achievements, the unified management of the CCDI agencies is a new thing that needs to be improved in practice, he said, urging the agencies to explore new ways to curb corruption.

(Agencies)



## Corruption the root of Zhejiang's housing price spike

A total of 67 officials were investigated or prosecuted for corruption related to land transactions in Zhejiang Province last year.

The 67 officials, which included 15 senior officials above the rank of bureau chief, were prosecuted or remained under investigation during the first 11 months of 2009, a source close to the Zhejiang judiciary told *China Daily*.

Rampant corruption within land allocation departments

has been widely attributed to escalating property prices in the province.

Real estate insiders said the cost of paying bribes to officials is often passed on to homebuyers.

"The greed of the accused government officials is definitely responsible for an unreasonable increase in property prices in Zhejiang," said Yin Lin, a senior researcher at the law institute of the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences.

A source within the Zhejiang

procuratorate's anti-corruption bureau said corruption was found at all levels of land transactions, including allocation and planning, determination of the terms of sale and auction.

The source said 18 of the 61 cases investigated last year demonstrated a conflict of interest between officials and real estate companies.

More than half of the accused officials were alleged to have taken money from real estate companies.

Included in the 67 officials is a former land and resources bureau official accused of accepting 650,000 yuan in bribes from property developers. She was also accused of helping real estate developers raise funds through a number of illegal channels.

Court records show that the amount of money involved in Zhejiang's land corruption cases is increasing.

Ni Jihua, deputy director of the province's anti-corruption bureau, said the amount

of money increased last year because of the rapid growth in land and housing prices.

Several corruption cases involved millions of yuan, Ni said.

Yin, of the law institute, said public scrutiny is usually more effective than legislation and media supervision when it comes to corruption.

"Of course, officials should declare their assets before they take office to prevent corruption," Yin said.

(Agencies)

# Bigger voice for China

## Xinhua establishes international news TV

2009 was China's year. While the US fought unpopular wars in the Middle East, China expanded its foreign aid, settled sensitive border conflicts in Asia and presented itself as an unthreatening economic giant. Now it wants more soft power.



Premier Wen Jiabao was CNC's first interviewee when it broadcast January 1.

On New Year's Day, Xinhua News Network Corporation (CNC) began broadcasting Chinese television newscasts round-the-clock, and also rolled out a finance and business channel. Xinhua has not said which countries receive the broadcast.

"The launch of the CNC is an important move for Xinhua to enrich the agency's business sectors and embrace the multimedia world," Xinhua President Li Congjun said during the launch in Beijing.

China has multibillion-yuan plans to raise the profile of its media abroad by expanding Xinhua, China Central

Television (CCTV) and *People's Daily* have reported.

The effort has a budget of 45 billion yuan, the *South China Morning Post* reported.

CNC World News plans to broadcast English programs from July. News in French, Spanish, Portuguese, Arabic and Russian will start later, Xinhua said.

Xinhua, a ministry-level body under the administration of the State Council, the country's cabinet, said it is transforming itself into a multimedia, worldwide news agency.

"We will make efforts to expand both domestic and overseas services using all kinds of networks and media, including overseas TV channels, the Internet, mobile phones and LED screens," Li said.

In July, CCTV started a 24-hour channel airing in 22 Arabic-speaking countries and reaching nearly 300 million viewers.

The media drive echoes efforts by Russia and Qatar to influence international news coverage through their state-funded Russia Today and Al-Jazeera channels. Those attempts to challenge the BBC and CNN have scored some success.



Xinhua News Agency launched CNC on December 31, 2009. Xinhua Photos

### Analysis

Xinhua has entered the world of 24-hour television news, but the news agency has to think hard about how to compete while avoiding becoming too much like its rivals, both at home and abroad.

"We will provide international news with a Chinese perspective and Chinese news with a global perspective for an overseas audience, operating based on market rules. But we will prevent com-

### CNC creates own niche

mercial interests from eroding media responsibility, and we oppose turning news into entertainment," Xinhua President Li Congjun said.

The signal can't be clearer: China is keen to gain more of a say in the global arena.

CNC vows to be itself, Li said, although he said it will cooperate and draw experiences from international media, such as CNN and the BBC.

Observers also doubt CNC wants to become China's second China Central Television (CCTV). CCTV, the country's dominant television station, has had its programs broadcast in almost every family, and has also built up extensive overseas networks.

Xinhua has tried to diversify its offerings, including embarking on investigative reporting. As it enters television, Xinhua aims to "eventually build a World

News network with Chinese characteristics, credibility and influence," Li said.

In the end, CNC will likely be another forum for China to promote its voice on hot topics from climate change to trade protectionism.

As the country's importance grows, what its government says will be more watched. For many international viewers, CNC could be where they hear it first.

### Background

To build a prosperous society, "we should build a modern communication system, further promote communication both at home and abroad, and create a healthy social environment," President Hu Jintao said in a letter to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the establishment of China Central Television (CCTV) in 2008.

The year 2009 witnessed multiple efforts by Chinese media to strengthen their capabilities in international cross-cultural communication.

Xinhua launched, together with eight other world media organizations, the

### Chinese mass media to push for soft power

World Media Summit from October 8 to 10 last year, with representatives from 170 media organizations gathering in Beijing.

Hu said at the summit that the Chinese government supports the Chinese media's collaboration with their foreign counterparts on news coverage, human resources and information technology.

Xinhua set up 35 LED screens in Europe to broadcast live news and special coverage, and the number of LED screens is expected to reach 100 in the first quarter of 2010. But Chinese media still cannot meet the demand of foreign audiences for comprehensive and objec-

tive coverage of China.

Over the past three decades, Chinese mass media have gained momentum and strength, with some exploring international markets.

The *Global Times*, affiliated with the *People's Daily*, the official newspaper of the party's Central Committee, put on the market its English version last April.

Zhang Yong, the *Global Times*' executive editor-in-chief, told Xinhua that his newspaper, as the country's second biggest English paper after *China Daily*, would reflect common people's opinions and try to integrate them with those

from officials.

CCTV established an Arabic and Russian channel in 2009 and this year plans to start a Portuguese channel.

China Radio International (CRI) opened many new channels in Australia, the US and Mongolia in 2009. This year it plans to expand its English broadcasting services in Houston, US, from six hours to 24 hours a day.

Last September, *Qiushi* (Seeking Truth), the official publication of the party's Central Committee, began to issue an English version of the quarterly journal.

(Agencies)



# CAFTA opens the door to integration in the East

By Li Zhixin

China and the Association of South-east Asian Nations (ASEAN) launched the China-ASEAN Free Trade Area (CAFTA) on January 1. The new trade cooperation is designed to boost two-way investment and business.

Experts say the event lifted the curtain for East Asian integration, but how will the free trade zone affect ordinary people?

## Benefits from tariff cuts

Supermarkets like Hualian, Renrenle and Nanchengbaihuo in Nanning, Guangxi Province, are placing imported mangoes, longans, pawpaws and coconuts from ASEAN member countries in a conspicuous new place.

"The noble Thai fruit – the mangosteen – used to be about 30 yuan per kilogram. Now they can be found for as little as 10 yuan," Fang Yulan, a Nanning resident, said.

Thuyen Sangree, 43, a Vietnamese fruit vendor who sells on the mainland, has been trading across the Guangxi Province border for 11 years.

"Business was hard at the start because I didn't have the money to boost my scale. The main hindrance was a heavy tariff on fruit that ruined what should have been competitive prices in the Chinese market," he said. "Waiting to get my fruits past the red tape was another problem, and it often wrecked the flavor of my goods. Paying duties was a real time waster," Sangree said.

When China and ASEAN members began to implement an Early Harvest Program in 2004, Sangree saw what tariff cuts could do. Today he heads up a company that moves 80 tons of fruit to Chinese clients every day.

Feng Bin, 29, a cork exporter in Beijing, also cheered the free trade announcement. With tariffs down, his clients in Malaysia and the Philippines have upped their orders.

"When we still had tariffs, my clients only ordered 4 to 5 tons per batch. It was about \$10,000 (68,300 yuan). But with the tariffs gone, their orders have doubled," he said.

Tariffs on 7,000 taxed items have steadily been hacked away since China and ASEAN members signed the Trade in Goods Agreement of China-ASEAN FTA in 2004.

## Convenient tourism

Zhao Xuyan, a Nanning resident, just finished her three-day tour of ASEAN member countries. "I spent less than 3,000 yuan to tour Vietnam, Thailand and Malaysia. Travel in ASEAN countries is almost as convenient as domestic travel now," the 29-year-old woman said.

"It took me 20 days to get a passport and one week to get visa before when I went to Vietnam. But now, since there's no more need for a visa, I can visit Vietnam with a border pass that takes only one day to process," she said.

The National Tourism Administration said China and ASEAN members have already eliminated many tourism barriers. China and Vietnam are working to establish a free travel Sino-Vietnamese International Tourism Cooperation Zone.

Vietnam, Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia have had Approved Destination Status since 2008 and been among Chinese travelers' top 10 most visited countries.

From 2003 to 2008, the number of Chinese people touring ASEAN member countries grew 15 percent each year, especially to destinations like Singapore, Malaysia, Vietnam, Cambodia, Myanmar, the Philippines and Brunei.

ASEAN members also sent more tourists to China than any other country.



The Free Trade Zone is hoped to bring mutual benefits for all member countries.

CFP Photo

## Expert

### CAFTA not ready to challenge the EU

CAFTA could be considered another effort at balancing global trade. But the road ahead is a bumpy one in spite of the promise, said Fan Ying, an East Asia specialist at the University of International Business and Economics.

"CAFTA was born at a time when global trade remained undaunted by the financial crisis. The limited economic and social development of member countries have helped to depress consumer demand. Because the area remains home to countless impoverished people, the CAFTA market remains far smaller than that of the European Union (EU) and the North American Free Trade Area (NAFTA)," he said.

The zero tariff treatment will cause a division of labor and specialization among producers within the new trading zone. "Outsourcing business will become prosperous. The companies will focus on parts at which they are adept and outsource the rest to other companies. It will be easier for competitive products to spread throughout all of CAFTA," he said.

But the politics and economic structures in the Asia-Pacific region are shaky. "Because ASEAN is establishing free trade areas with countries like Japan, South Korea, India, Australia and New Zealand, it's hard to guess how they will coordinate all these free trade areas," he said.

Although the CAFTA is the largest by population and third by its economic power, it is still only a regional operation when compared to the EU and NAFTA. But it does have its unique advantages: "This area is home to a huge export-driven economy. It is a global factory and home to many emerging markets," he said.



A Free Trade Area means new opportunity for ASEAN countries.

IC Photo

## Background

### CAFTA Facts and figures

**Members:** China and 10 ASEAN nations: Indonesia, Brunei, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Laos, Vietnam, Cambodia and Myanmar.

**Population:** 584 million in ASEAN countries and 1.3 billion in China – a third of the world's total people.

**Gross Domestic Product (GDP):** \$6 trillion (41 trillion yuan), or one – ninth of the world's total GDP.

**Trade volume:** \$4.5 trillion, the world's third largest after the European Union (EU) and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

**Trade relations:** China-ASEAN trade grew 24.2 percent annually from 2003 to 2008. Bilateral trade reached \$231 billion in 2008, up from \$78.2 billion in 2003 and \$6.3 billion in 1991. China is the third largest trade partner of ASEAN nations while they are China's fourth largest partner.

**Investment relations:** China's direct investment in ASEAN countries was \$2.18 billion in 2008, up from \$230 million in 2003. ASEAN's actual investment in China totaled \$5.46 billion, up from \$2.93 billion in 2003.

**Lowered tariffs:** The average tariff on goods from ASEAN countries to China has been cut to 0.1 percent from 9.8 percent. The six original ASEAN members – Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand – will slash the average tariff on Chinese goods from 12.8 percent to 0.6 percent.

By 2015, there will be no tariff on 90 percent of all goods traded between China and the four new ASEAN members: Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam.

### A CAFTA timeline

In November 2002, Premier Zhu Rongji and leaders of the 10 ASEAN nations at the sixth China-ASEAN summit signed the landmark Framework Agreement on ASEAN-China Comprehensive Economic Cooperation, starting the process of building a free trade zone.

Under the agreement, the free trade zone was to be completed by 2010.

In November 2004, China and the ASEAN nations signed a free goods trade agreement which said the countries would begin slashing tariffs on many products in July 2005.

Last August 15, China and the ASEAN nations signed an investment treaty at the eighth trade ministers' meeting and started to open their markets to each other, signaling the completion of major negotiations.

# Save soccer

## Gov't steps in to curb match fixing and gambling

By Huang Daohen

Soccer in China is ailing, frustrated fans say, citing match fixing and illegal gambling. For a time only the fans cared about the game's future, but now the government has stepped in to take charge. A supervisory committee, headed by the State Council, was formed Monday to tackle corruption in the sport and clean up its tarnished image.

But many observers doubt that this "best and last" opportunity will revive the sport.



Though soccer in China is mired in allegations of corruption, many still hope the sport can be revived.

IC Photo

### Gov's crackdown

As many as 10 ministries are involved in the supervisory committee, which vows to crack down hard on gambling in the soccer industry, the Chinese Football Association (CFA) announced at its annual general assembly Monday.

The anti-gambling campaign aims to establish a healthy sporting environment and to turn around the negative image of Chinese soccer, CFA said.

Sporting fans have been closely watching recent investigations involving soccer leagues. Last November, police arrested a number of club leaders and players in Shenyang, Liaoning Province, after allegations of bribery and match fixing surfaced.

Even the national team's head coach, Gao Hongbo, has been implicated after his former assistant in Xiamen, You Kewei, was arrested for match fixing. Media commentators said You would not have put his team on the line without Gao's consent.

Things will soon change with the State Council leading the supervisory committee, Yang Yimin, vice president of the CFA, told a Chengdu newspaper.

The committee, which will regulate the operation of clubs, includes the General Administration of Sports, the Ministry of Public Security, the State Administration of Taxation and the National Audit Office.

"Under the regulation and supervision of so many departments, illegal gambling among clubs will be uncovered, and thus will stop gambling syndicates from bribing clubs to throw games," Yang was quoted by the paper as saying. "If it is strictly enforced, soccer gambling will be completely eradicated."

But soccer fans remain skeptical.

A survey conducted by Tencent.com showed that more than 60 percent of respondents doubt the committee can make significant progress in cleaning up the sport.

### Experts say

#### Where to now, Chinese soccer?

The soccer industry has degenerated over the years. The government injected large amounts of money, and in 2004, a professional soccer league was created to help the sport develop. But it still seems to be going nowhere: national teams keep losing in international competitions, soccer clubs are losing money and stadiums are losing fans.

Though the reasons behind this are complicated, I believe the most urgent thing, aside from the current crackdown on corruption, is to build a successful youth program. A shortage of reserve talent is the main reason soccer is going nowhere.

The latest partial statistics show

only 170,000 teenagers in China have registered to play soccer. In a country with 1.3 billion people, the number should be 30 million to 40 million. But the good news is that about 2,200 primary and middle schools in 46 cities have started training programs.

The public should pay more attention to youth programs. The first thing to do is to have more kids playing soccer to popularize it at the grassroots level. That is where professional players and the national force can come from.

— Cai Wei, soccer coach and former national team player

#### Profits drive gambling

The country's soccer teams, both men's and women's, have long been considered as something we need but don't want because of terrible performance.

The recent involvement of some soccer clubs in gambling scandals has shocked the already disgusted public. People wonder why so many players and club managers choose this road.

Profit drives the gambling.

It is no secret that the country's soccer industry is seriously ill with the sicknesses of match fixing and gambling. This is not an isolated problem, as it also happens in other countries. But in China, due to soccer clubs' poor profits, many choose to

gain by betting or by getting paid off by match fixers.

You cannot imagine coaches and players betting against their own teams in exchange for money? But this is what has happened. The soccer industry is dirty. An insider said that an outsider cannot begin to imagine how dirty Chinese soccer is. Now we know. It is dirtier than we can imagine. Little wonder the performance of teams is so poor.

We should support the government's move to crack down on soccer gambling and corruption. Therein lies the hope for Chinese soccer.

— Roberto Chen, sports editor at Xinhua new agency

### Comment

#### Numbed by bad performance

When the national team lost at home in the qualifying round for the 2010 World Cup in 2008, we felt numb. We no longer see any hope for Chinese soccer: not even now when the government is trying to save the sport.

— Dennis Zhao, college teacher

#### Improve profit making

We cannot ask soccer players to improve on their own. One way to curb gambling is to learn from how other countries pay their players. For instance, in Japan and Italy, TV broadcasts make up the majority of clubs' income.

— Dora Pallis, PR consultant

#### A real anti-gambling drive?

We hope the anti-gambling drive is serious this time, as past anti-corruption campaigns were farcical. The cleanup cannot be thorough unless it covers all people and organizations in the industry.

— Miles Hu, company secretary

#### Positive signs

Chinese soccer has got some big problems, but I think we're now seeing an upturn. We had difficulties in running the club, but now even the central government is concerned about the issues and is providing practical help.

— Zhang Wei, official with Beijing Guoan



# American singer back for 2nd China tour

By Wang Yu

Chris Garneau, a singer who found fame on MySpace, opened his second China tour with a concert at Yugongyishan on New Year's Day. He is back in the country only six months after his first tour.

"When I played in Beijing last year for the first time, I never thought that there would be so many people — about 600 listeners," Garneau says. His five-day tour also took him to Shanghai, Hangzhou, Nanjing and Shenzhen, places that once sounded exotic.

The 27-year-old singer and song writer was born in Boston, US, and moved to Paris with his family during grade school. He fell in love with music as a child learning to play the piano. After high school, he briefly attended Berklee College of Music in Boston, but dropped out after one term and moved to Brooklyn, New York — a place he considers "heaven for independent musicians."

Garneau says moving to New York City was the best move he ever made in his search for happiness. "I felt like an outsider whatever I did and didn't have many

friends. When I moved to New York, I began to feel the significance of life," he says. "The city is like a huge mirror. You cannot run away. All you can do is to face yourself and the challenges."

His performing career began in the clubs of New York's East Village and downtown Manhattan. Soon, his name spread among live-music lovers, and after an introduction by Jamie Stewart and Caralee McElroy of the rock band Xiu Xiu, he signed with the record label Absolutely Kosher.

His debut album *Music for Tourists*, filled with emotional songs, was released in 2006 and was soon sold on iTunes. With the help of the social-networking site MySpace, the album became a hit.

Many of his Chinese listeners remember the record's cover illustration: an airplane falling from the light-blue sky toward a green field. The cover was featured on the pages of many Chinese magazines and websites that year.

But unlike its cover picture, the songs in *Music for Tourists* were melancholy; a few were pained. In "Baby's Romance,"



Chris Garneau

Photo provided by Chris Garneau

Garneau recounted being sexually abused as a child. The album revealed other secrets.

Garneau is gay, a fact he has never hidden from fans. Before the release of *Music for Tourists*, which contained songs co-written by an ex-boyfriend, Absolutely Kosher asked him if he was going to be open about his sexual orientation. Garneau said he would admit the truth. "However, I don't want people to focus on this instead of my music," he says.

Last year, he released his second album *El Radio*, recorded with the help of friends in a lake house on the US northeast. The record was released shortly after his first China tour. His upcoming third record will again incorporate childhood memories — what he considers the worst part of his life but undeniably a source of artistic inspiration.

During this month's tour, Garneau will perform in seven cities in 10 days, including Hong Kong. He acknowledged the role that pirated MP3 files play in helping spread new music to foreign lands. "Pirated music helps an artist express himself to more people. It's in a sense a useful method," he says.

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# US affirms China's need for strict adoption rules



More Chinese adoptees are taken to the US than any other country.

IC Photo

By Zhao Hongyi

US Embassy officials confirmed earlier this week that China's policies on foreign adoptions were "transparent, strict and essential to protect the children."

The remarks were made in conjunction with a sexual abuse case involving a 7-year-old Chinese girl and her adoptive parents in Washington State – a case Chinese media have been closely following.

Eddy Tony Whisenhunt, 51, a truck driver, has been charged with sexually abusing the girl the past four years. Whisenhunt admitted the charges in court on December 10 and is facing 18 years behind bars. Donna Marie Whisenhunt, the girl's adoptive mother, is also facing trial for providing assistance in the crime.

The couple adopted the girl five years ago through the Chinese legal process, Washington media have reported.

Linda Donahue, minister counselor and consul general at the US Embassy, affirmed the importance of following Chinese adoption laws and procedures to prevent a repeat of the Whisenhunt case. "The purpose is to protect the adopted kids," she said.

Du Xinli, director of the Institute of Private Laws at China University of Political Science and Law, said the sexual abuse case is under US jurisdiction since the girl is now a US citizen. But she said "it's understandable that the Chinese media are focusing on the case as the girl is from China."

The best way to prevent such crimes, Du said, is to have

stricter monitoring of the adoption process and to have higher qualifications for adoptive couples in such areas as educational background, financial capability and social status.

As of June 2009, 17 countries and regions have set up adoption agreements with China and at least 135 adoption agencies are involved, according to the China Center for Adoption Affairs.

China began allowing foreign adoptions in 1999, and since then US families have adopted 60,000 children, including a girl who joined the family of US Ambassador to Beijing Jon Huntsman.

Huntsman has taken the girl to visit her hometown of Yangzhou, Jiangsu Province, to better understand her family background and native culture. Many other American parents have taken similar trips with their adopted children.

In 2005, US nationals adopted 7,906 Chinese children. The number decreased to 3,908 in 2008 and 3,003 in 2009, the center for adoption said, citing stricter Chinese adoption laws.

In 2007, the government legislated new requirements for adoptive couples: they must be married, be no more than 50 years old, have no record of mental problems and have to meet strict financial, educational and social qualifications.

In the past decade a number of abuse cases involving Chinese adoptees have emerged, including a couple in the US who wanted to abandon their adopted daughter because of her unsightly appearance. The couple gave up the plan after media exposed the story.

## Visa-free travel to ASEAN countries expected soon

By Liang Meilan

The launch of the China-ASEAN Free Trade Area (CAFTA) on January 1 brings hope of visa exemptions for Chinese tourists bound for ASEAN member countries.

The policy "is going into the concrete preparation phase," a Chinese travel agency has said. But embassies of the 10 ASEAN member countries said they have not yet received any related information.

Chinese travel agencies were optimistic about China-ASEAN visa-free travel, which would allow short-term tourists to cross borders with only their passports. If the policy goes into effect, this will also mean simplified departure procedures and lower travel costs.

"Once it takes effect, this policy will undoubtedly be hailed as a boon for the tourism industry on both sides," a staff member at the Thai Embassy in

Beijing, said. "An obvious advantage of the upcoming policy on the part of Thailand is it will relieve the congestion of Chinese tourists who apply for visas on arrival at Thai customs."

Bai Jin, manager of the Southeast Asian tourist market at Comfort Travel Service, said many clients were looking forward to the policy's implementation. "They've expressed preference for ASEAN travel products if the policy comes out before the peak travel season of Spring Festival. It's a good chance for them to go to a resort like Phuket and celebrate the festival in a tropical climate."

As preparation for the much-anticipated new policy, agencies like Comfort Travel are busy designing new travel packages, including charter flights and independent tours.

Meanwhile, the Beijing embassies of ASEAN member

countries said they have not received instructions regarding visa exemption for Chinese tourists. "The exact time for this policy to come out depends on the speed of negotiations between the Chinese government and ASEAN," Mohammed Nazib, a visa officer at the Malaysia Embassy, said.

For now, travel agencies are reminding people planning a trip to Southeast Asia to apply for their visas early since the old procedures remain.

Under the China-ASEAN free trade pact inked at the establishment of CAFTA, the two sides will also offer special access to each other's services market, such as the business and tourism industries.

ASEAN is composed of Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore, the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam.

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# Breaking a circle of ignorance and crime

By Li Zhixin

Nanjing International School (NIS), on the city's eastern outskirts, erects a giving tree each Christmas. The tree is decorated with colorful cards made by rural students in Jiangsu Province. Each NIS foreign student picks a card to bring back to his home country during the holiday and mails gifts back to whoever's name is on the card.

This practice has been going on for four years, but few foreign students and rural students know how the tradition began.

All the rural students are scholars of Pfrang Association, a Nanjing-based charity, established in 2000. The organization has tried to create hope from tragedy: the murder of Jürgen Pfrang, a manager at automaker DaimlerChrysler, and his family in their Nanjing house when four young village people broke into their home to rob them.

After the four men were convicted and given a life sentence, a group of foreigners living in Nanjing decided to honor the departed by coming up with a solution to what they believed was the root cause of the crime: inadequate rural access to education. By the end of 2000, Pfrang Association was born.

"Pfrang's money allows children to go to school instead of being mired in rural poverty, which affects so many across the country," Julia Guesten, one of the organizers, said. The association hopes free schooling will help poor rural students escape the vicious cycle of lack of education, unemployment and crime, and help

them reach their full potential and lead meaningful lives.

"If the Pfrangs were still alive, they would be the first family to support the project. I think this is the most meaningful way to remember them," Guesten said.

Since its founding, the organization has sponsored the education of 500 middle and high school students in rural areas, as well as provided them with money for books, clothing, food and other school-related expenses.

"As long as they have opportunities and the ability to work, they won't think of committing a crime. They will do more things beneficial to society," said Dominik Nowak, the association's executive chairman, who credits Germany's education system for helping him escape poverty.

"If it were not free, my parents could not have afforded my educational expenses. I would not have finished my studies and found a job, let alone have the life I dreamt of," the 46-year-old project supervisor of Baden-Württemberg International Economic and Scientific Cooperation said.

Pfrang runs its scholarship program with the help of Amity Foundation, China's largest charity, through a network of schools in Jiangsu's Lianshui, Guanyun and Huai'an counties. Priority is given to orphans, handicapped children, students from single-parent families and females.

Pfrang also holds two major fundraising events each year: the Pfrang Gala in April and the Pfrang Day in October, both held at NIS and supported by the city's expatriates.



Pfrang Association staff and sponsored students

Photo provided by Julia Guesten

## Three-Michelin-star chef coming to town

By Annie Wei

Many of the world's top chefs, restaurateurs and winemakers came to town last year, including Daniel Boulud, a New York chef and restaurateur who owns Maison Boulud on Qianmen Avenue, and Robert Joseph, a British wine critic. At the end of the month, Marc Veyrat, a three-Michelin-star French chef, will whip up his specialties at the Summit Club.

Veyrat is one of only four chefs to have ever received three Michelin stars twice, and the only one to have ever received a perfect score on the accompanying certificate. Veyrat, who has never attended a cooking school, is known for his creativity and innovation, particularly in using

herbs grown in the French Alps. He developed vegetable dishes using the rhizome of various wild plants to replace flour, cream and butter.

He uses traditional techniques combined with new technology to create new delicacies. Veyrat's Paris restaurant L'Auberge de L'Eridan is one of the city's most booked: it has a waiting list of six months.

Lucient Sui, general manager of the elite Summit Club, said many hotels and restaurants in Beijing have organized events featuring two-Michelin-star chefs, but none have ever brought in a three-star chef like Veyrat. Veyrat will prepare dinner at the Club on January 29 and 30, with attendees limited to 50 people.

Summit Club will be working closely with Veyrat, who will fly in every three or four months to update its menu, Sui said, adding that he expects the city to see more big names in the industry as Beijing secures a place as one of the "it" dining destinations worldwide.

Xu Long, the chief chef of the Western dining department at the Great Hall of the People and the country's most knowledgeable when it comes to herbs, is scheduled to meet with Veyrat. Xu said he is looking forward to exchanging information with the French chef.

For more information on Veyrat's visit to Beijing, call the Summit Club at 5824 9888 extension 124 or 143.

### Event

#### Tango Workshop with Luis Castro and Claudia Mendoza

This 7-class workshop is based on Castro and Mendoza's Theory on Tango Dance described in their book *Argentine Tango: The Structure, The Dance*. The authors say tango has five main elements that make up its essence: the walk, the embrace, communication, choreography and improvisation and musicality. Workshop participants will learn how to improve their skills by mastering these elements.

Where: Beijing Youth Palace, 68 Xizhimen Nan Dajie, Xicheng District

When: January 8, 8:30-10 pm

Cost: 1 class 210 yuan, 3 classes 560 yuan, 5 classes 850 yuan, 7 classes 980 yuan (pre-registration); 1 class 240 yuan and 7 classes 1,100 yuan (at the door)

Email:

alicepanyy@yahoo.com.cn

#### 8th Red Bull Nanshan Open

Watch 30 foreign and Chinese pro snowboarders compete for the top prize of \$25,000 (170,000 yuan) at the Red Bull Nanshan Open this Saturday. The event is the largest Asian snowboarding competition on the Swatch Ticket to Ride World Snowboard Tour and the largest ever snowboarding competition in China.

Where: Quiksilver Nanshan Mellow Park, Nanshan Ski Village, Miyun County

When: January 9, 9 am - 4 pm

Cost: 20 yuan for park entrance ticket

#### Book swap and board games

There are hundreds of books for the taking at this monthly event, where the selection gets better each month. Everything from thrillers to nonfiction and chick lit is available. If English isn't your thing, there are also French and Portuguese books.

There are only a few rules: books are one-for-one except for children's books (three-for-one if they are picture books or short-chapter books). Textbooks, classics and Chinese-language titles are not accepted.

Where: Sequoia Cafe, 44 Guanghua Lu, Chaoyang District

When: January 9, 2-6 pm

Tel: 6590 2525

#### Navigating territories by Rirkrit Tiravanija

Artist Rirkrit Tiravanija from Tang Contemporary Art-Beijing gallery will talk about his group art experiences, challenges of the craft, and civic and institutional opportunities.

Where: Ullens Center for Contemporary Art (UCCA), 4 Juxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: January 10, 5-6:30 pm

Tel: 6438 6675

Cost: Free

(By Wei Ying)



Marc Veyrat, a three-Michelin-star French chef

Photo provided by Lucient Sui



# Are we ready for community-supported agriculture?

By Annie Wei

As food safety issues become a major public concern, an increasing number of small organic farms like DeRunWu, Shien and BEYOND have set up shop and built good relationships with foreign residents.

Now eco-agricultural farms need to win over local consumers. Shi Yan, a 27-year-old doctoral student at Renmin University of China, is part of the campaign. In 2008, she became the first Chinese national to study community-supported agriculture (CSA) in the US, and last year began her CSA research project outside of North Sixth Ring Road.

This weekend, Shi and other eco-agricultural experts are holding a seminar at Renmin University to talk about how urban and rural residents can help each other promote more environmentally friendly and safer eating habits.

*Beijing Today* talked to her about her passion for CSA and how it can be popularized in the country.



Shi Yan creates a farming model she learned in the US.

## Little Donkey Farm

Shi runs Little Donkey Farm, located at Penghuangling, northwest of Haidian District. Although she finished her first project in November – 20 weeks of delivering vegetables to members scattered all over Beijing – she still commutes between school and farm every week. On weekends Shi opens the farm to the public, to promote eco-agriculture and CSA.

Community-supported agriculture has been around in North America for 30 years, but it is unknown in China. Shi applied to study CSA in the US after she heard that one of her professors, Zhou Li, went to the States to study its business model.

Like many Chinese students, Shi had little field experience in agriculture. She jokes that running a farm turned her from a *xiaozi*, a term for someone who aspires to a Western lifestyle, into a "rustified farmer."

After a stint with Earthrise, a CSA farm in Minnesota, US, in 2008, Shi was eager to apply what she learned. Luckily, Renmin University had a 133,000-square-meter farm that serves as a teaching and experiment base. Shi quickly went to work organizing a farming program.

The farm took in 46 people who worked on two phases: planting and delivery. During the planting season, a person was given a 30-square-meter plot of land to tend on weekends and paid 1,000 yuan for a total of 20 weeks. When they

shifted to delivery, they were paid 2,500 yuan.

Little Donkey Farm made its first vegetable delivery on May 31 last year. That day, the farm's 46 members received 10 kilograms of vegetables each, including lettuce, pokeberry root and 1.5 kilograms of peanuts. The phase ran for 20 weeks and ended on October 17.

The program and Shi's story received a lot of media attention and the farm drew visitors: government officials, entrepreneurs and ordinary citizens. Shi said the farm plans to expand its membership to 200 starting this March. She describes her experience at the farm as "very inspiring."

## CSA in China

According to local media, Little Donkey Farm's members said working in the fields helped relieve urban pressures, provided them with a safe food source and gave their children an opportunity to interact with nature.

If CSA sounds that good, can it easily be popularized in the country?

Shi says "No." First is the trust issue between consumers and farmers. This is easier to build in smaller places, where urban citizens depend only on several farmers for their vegetable and fruit supply. In China, consumers are widely spread out.

Second is the size of farmlands. In Western countries, farmers have huge fields, unlike in China where a farmer might

only have 1,300 to 2,000 square meters. Small farms also necessitate the use of pesticide since pests can easily transfer between neighboring lands.

Shi said that CSA's success domestically cannot depend on individual farming but in creating farming cooperatives. "There should be a trusted third party between farmers and consumers, like schools, NGOs and government bodies at the start of building CSA," she said.

Shi's mentor Wen Tiejun, a leading agricultural economist and the creator of China's first free farmers' training center – Yanyangchu Countryside Construction Institute in Hebei Province – said trust and risk sharing between CSA farmers and consumers were the biggest challenges to transplanting the practice to China.

## Team up with more people

But Shi is confident CSA will slowly but surely grow. She says more and more young Chinese are interested in eco-agriculture, and some of them will be working as interns or volunteers during Little Donkey's coming planting season.

The farm is now working with Guoren Chengxiang Hezuoshe, a cooperative led by agriculture professors like Wen Tiejun, which aims to improve farmers' income through eco-farming. The collaboration has helped them find many reliable clients and vendors nationwide.



Many urban dwellers supported Little Donkey Farm during its first harvest last year.

## What is CSA

Community-supported agriculture (CSA) is a social-economic model of agriculture and food distribution. It consists of a community of individuals who pledge support to a farm operation where the growers and consumers share the risks and

benefits of food production. CSAs usually have a system of weekly deliveries or pick-ups of vegetables and fruits, sometimes including dairy products and meat. Similar production and economic sub-systems are being implemented in various countries.

## 24 weeks of delivery from Little Donkey Farm in 2010

The farm has four types of distribution, done once or twice a week.

- If you pick up your produce from the farm, the cost is 1,440 yuan for one pick-up per week and 2,800 yuan for two.

- The farm has set up two delivery spots: in Suzhoujie, Haidian District and Huilongguan, Chaoyang District, where pick up costs 1,600 yuan once per week and 3,200 yuan for two.

- A group of five can request for a spot delivery, which costs 1,700 yuan for one delivery per week and 3,400

yuan for two.

- Home deliveries cost 2,000 for one delivery per week and 4,000 yuan for two.

The farm's working members pay only 1,200 yuan for maintaining a 30-square-meter piece of land.

*Beijing Today* found that produce from Guoren Chengxiang Hezuoshe were cheaper than those in other organic supermarkets around town.

For more information, visit [blog.sina.com.cn/usashiyan](http://blog.sina.com.cn/usashiyan) or email [guorenchengxiang@163.com](mailto:guorenchengxiang@163.com).



Interns and volunteers picking fresh vegetables and packing them for delivery.

Photos provided by Shi Yan

# Tapping into the mind of a child

By Charles Zhu

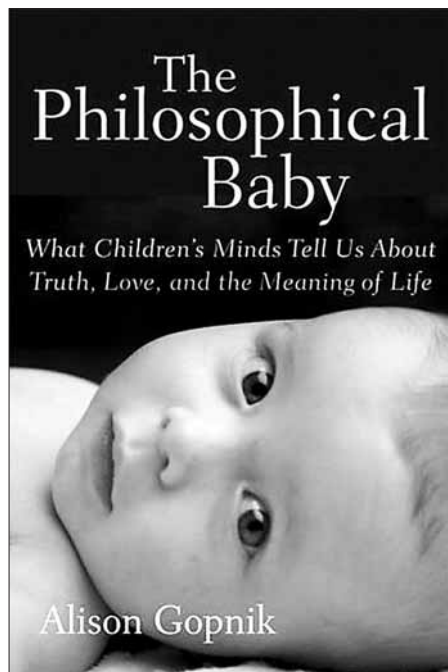
The idea of pint-sized philosophers may be a tough sell, but a leading developmental psychologist says children are "smarter, more imaginative and more caring and even more conscious than adults are."

That is what Alison Gopnik, a professor of psychology at the University of California, Berkeley, argues in her new book *The Philosophical Baby: What Children's Minds Tell Us About Truth, Love, and the Meaning of Life* (288pp, Farrar Straus & Giroux, \$25).

Gopnik says studying the thoughts of small children can shed new light on ancient philosophical problems. Her conclusion is based on what the science of recent decades has had to say about the minds of kids. The book contains interesting anecdotes about how one becomes a "grown-up."

She discusses such complicated philosophical issues as consciousness, identity and morality, the clues to which the psychological study of children may provide.

Gopnik argues that although young children's thinking may seem illogical and their play functionless, their imagination and exploration actually reflect the operation of the same powerful causal learning mechanisms that enable our uniquely human achievements in areas such as science and art. She believes that babies are more conscious than adults, not less, thus offering a new idea to the current dominant evolutionary perspective. This runs counter to the conventional ideas inherited from Sigmund Freud and Jean Piaget that small children cannot distinguish between truth and fiction. Gopnik proves through carefully designed experiments that even 2- and 3-year olds are



very good at telling pretense from reality.

In the book, she provides anecdotes from her experience as a parent and references from pop culture. She compares human development to insect metamorphosis, stating that it is "like caterpillars becoming butterflies," but with the twist that "children are the vibrant, wandering butterflies who transform into caterpillars inching along the grown-up path." She refers to children as "the blue-sky guys, the brainstormers" and adults as "production and marketing." She also says that babies' brains are like the little streets of old Paris, whereas adult brains

have broader boulevards.

Her most inspiring comparison is on external consciousness – awareness of the outside world. She argues that the external consciousness of a young child is like a lantern rather than a spotlight. Children distribute their attention more evenly across their environment, whereas adults focus on the things they think are important and ignore the rest.

Gopnik says children who have imaginary friends tend to be better at predicting the thoughts and feelings of actual people. Autistic children almost never create imaginary friends or engage in any kind of pretend play.

The notion that morals develop only in adolescence also appears to be wrong. Even children as young as two years old can grasp the difference between morals. She found that small children recognized it would be wrong to hurt another child even if a teacher told them to. Children are naturally empathetic from birth and, surprisingly, tend to exhibit altruism from the age of one, she says.

Nearly all the great philosophers have been men who have no experience in parenting, and this explains why the nature of children's minds has never been discussed in philosophy. When Socrates pondered the immortality of the soul, he should have considered the sort of afterlife that parents can obtain through their children, she says.

Similarly, she says moral philosophers should recognize the empathetic bonds between generations, and that skeptics who wonder how we can ever attain certain knowledge of the outside world would do well to review how children learn.

## Stories from the ant tribe

By He Jianwei

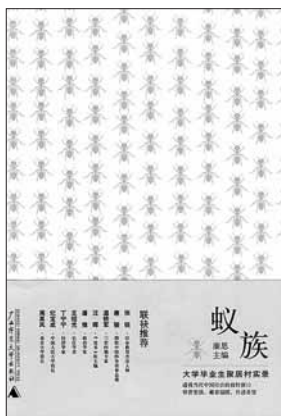
Farmers, migrant workers and the unemployed have long been the "Big Three" of China's disadvantaged groups. But a new group called the "ant tribe" has now appeared.

Ant tribes are college graduates born after the 1980s who dreamed of making it big in the city, but instead got a life of low pay and bad housing.

Lian Si, a post-doctoral student from Peking University, interviewed graduates between the ages of 22 and 29 in 2007 and collected the interviews in *Ant Tribes* (339pp, Guangxi Normal University Press, 29 yuan) last year.

His study was prompted when he read a report in *China Newsweek* about a graduate from China Agriculture University who was struggling after failing to find a job and failing to get into graduate school. It gave a passing mention to the plight of rural graduates.

"It is an alarming phenomenon that they live in such ramshackle dwellings. I worried about these young people because they received a high education and should be the future of our country," Lian said.



In February 2008, Lian and several students he recruited from Renmin University of China started a survey of Beijing's ant tribe.

The first survey was finished within a week, and in August 2008 they continued their surveys in Shanghai, Guang-

zhou, Wuhan and Xi'an.

"The 'ants' made 1,000 to 2,500 yuan per month and spent 377 yuan on rent and 529 yuan on food on average," he said.

Three to five people rent a house. The more people they can pack into the walls, the less it costs. A two-hour bus trip to the office was a common theme.

For instance, in Tangjialing, a village in Haidian District outside North Fifth Ring Road, there were 3,000 villagers and 40,000 college graduates. They crammed two or three people into a 10-square-meter room without a toilet – the only must was broadband Internet.

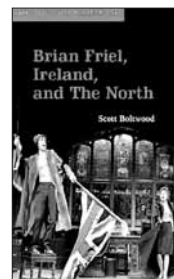
Many ant tribes work in sales. Most of them do not even have labor contracts with their employers and are not entitled to any social, or medical insurance.

The book's publication has brought more attention to the ant tribe's plight. For many parents, it was an eye-opening account of how their children struggle.

Tangjialing village plans to build a new apartment for young office workers. But the question is what the developers plan to charge for units: if the "ants" cannot afford it, they will march off to another hole.

## CNPIEC Bookstore book listing

The China National Publication Import and Export Corporation's (CNPIEC) bookstore recommends these new arrivals to Beijing Today readers.



**Brian Friel, Ireland, and The North**

By Scott Boltwood, 272pp, Cambridge University Press, \$36.99

After nearly five decades as one of Ireland's most celebrated playwrights, Brian Friel has been the subject of ten books and dozens of articles. This new book examines Friel's more recent plays, his interviews and his essays to chart the author's ideological evolution.



**The Awakening**

By Kate Chopin, 301pp, BiblioLife, \$29.99

This novella by Kate Chopin was first published in 1899. Set in New Orleans on the Southern Louisiana coast at the end of the 19th century, the plot centers on Edna Pontellier and her struggle to reconcile her increasingly unorthodox views on femininity and motherhood with the prevailing social attitudes of the turn-of-the-century South. It is widely considered to be a proto-feminist precursor to American modernism.



**Tales of Unrest**

By Joseph Conrad, 306pp, BiblioBazaar, \$24.99

This collection of Joseph Conrad's short stories was republished last November. Conrad, celebrated author of *Nostromo*, *The Secret Agent*, *Lord Jim* and *An Outcast of the Island*, was a Polish novelist who lived most of his life in Britain and did not learn English until 21.

(By He Jianwei)



# Invisible toy of 2010 a blast from the past



By Zhang Dongya

US network Improv Everywhere called on 2,000 people to revive a 1970s toy and walk their "invisible dogs" in Brooklyn, New York, last October.

The event exposed China to the classic toy for the first time, and it has since been adopted by environmental activists as an entertaining gadget and discussion piece for their cause.

The "dogs" have since been used in big cities like Beijing, Shanghai and Chengdu, with thousands of people walking them in November and December. With factories preparing to fill massive orders, the invisible dog may be to 2010 what the Rubik's Cube was to 2009.

## Virtual pets in meatspace

A hundred people showed up to walk their "invisible dogs" in Sanlitun Village the last weekend in November.

The event, called NC63 – short for No Computer 63 Hours – called on people not to use a computer from 6 pm Friday till 9 am Monday.

Participants walked the dogs throughout the shopping park, distributing leaflets about NC63 to shoppers.

"We used invisible dogs because they were trendy and eye-catching," said Du Weiwei, editor of Mosh.cn, one of the initiators.

"Also, it helped convey our message. Invisible dogs are not real, so walking one is like walking a virtual dog online. People kill time online feeding pets, and we wanted to show they can do the same thing without the Internet," she said.

The event was a hit with many shoppers. The participants have already learned to walk the dogs as if they were real – some even did tricks like feeding the invisible dogs water or picking up invisible poop.

"Most people laughed or smiled. At the beginning, they have no idea what we were doing, but after we explained it they were intrigued," said Yang Suona, the planning manager of Mosh.cn who also participated.

"We made a point of not disturbing people, so there was no trouble even when some members took their dogs into the Apple store to promote NC63," Yang said.

But some did not understand. "We keep dogs to meet our emotional demands: how can this be a replacement?" one old man said.

Yang said foreigners were the most friendly and open to the invisible dogs: some pretended to touch or pet them.

## Invisible dogs in the city

On December 20, 1,000 people

in Beijing, Shanghai, Changsha, Chengdu and Guangzhou took their invisible dogs for a stroll to promote environmental protection.

The diverse group brought together people of all age groups. They took the leash with one hand and a poop bag in the other. They walked the dogs, collecting litter along the way.

The initiator A Lei who organized the event online, said he hoped to draw attention to the need for environmental protection after the Copenhagen Climate Conference and the movie *2012*.

Participants in Chengdu, Sichuan Province, walked invisible dogs from Hejiangting to Funanhe collecting cigarette butts and dog poop. Participants included 70-year-old retirees and students from Sichuan University.

In Beijing, some participants wore pajamas to show that even otaku come out to support environmental protection!

Hangzhou participants met in Wulin Square and people in Changsha chose the park to walk their dogs.

The goal was not to ban dogs, but to call on people to raise them in environmentally-friendly ways, A Lei said.

## Large but empty market

Invisible dogs, first invented in the US in the 1970s, are a toy made of a rigid leash and collar. A curve near the collar makes it appear as though it is attached to a real dog. The dogs only came to China three months ago, and factories are still scrambling to put them into production.

The invisible dogs used at both events were prototypes supplied by new factories. Mosh.cn asked a company in Hebei Province to make leashes, each of which would cost 60 yuan. They have planned to order them from the US, but after

importing fees it would have cost 900 yuan each.

The company produced the leashes using pictures of older models supplied by the website. The first models were rejected because they were too heavy, and after four days of improvements, a test batch of 100 leashes was ready.

"They came out fine and have bright colors and similar patterns to the foreign ones," Mosh.cn's planning manager Yang Suona said.

The invisible dogs are now available for pre-order on Taobao.com from 10 Beijing sellers. The prices range from 58 yuan to 108 yuan.

Yuqingling, one seller, said he found a factory to produce the toy and units would be available in two or three weeks.

Since December there have been scores of buyers asking about invisible dogs everyday, she said.

"I have no idea how the factory will imitate the foreign designs," she said. "But the toy is a lot of fun, and it was the most popular new thing this winter."

She said the price is a rough estimate, and it may be adjusted later after production.



The activists in China are using invisible dogs to draw attention to their concepts and cause.



Photos provided by Mosh.cn

# Convenience store chain of Taiwanese snacks

By Annie Wei

What's Bellagio's secret? Apart from rich-tasting, reasonably priced Taiwanese dishes, its two restaurants in town are centrally located and are open until the wee hours of the morning to offer partying urbanites much-needed sustenance.

With Beijing's Taiwanese population on the rise, there is now another option: a chain of convenience stores that offer the island's favorite treats. Jiasiduo has built a reputation among the city's Taiwanese community with its good selection of instant noodles, frozen food, snacks and liquor shipped from home.

We checked out the store's Lido branch and found packaged traditional drinks like ginger tea (29 yuan) and herbal jelly mix (46 yuan for 15 packets). Ginger tea is commonly used as a cold remedy as it is said to boost the immune system, soothe sore throats and relieve flu symptoms. It is also believed to improve digestion and help relieve nausea. The store's sales staff suggested having a cup of ginger tea in the morning to prepare the stomach for heavier food.

Herbal jelly mix, *shaoxiancao* is a hot drink that you can make more exciting by adding bits of mango, boiled beans or sweet potato. Each packet costs 13 yuan; a good deal considering that it's 26 yuan a glass at Bellagio.

Taiwanese meat floss, *ronsong* is known for its tastiness as well as its light and fluffy texture similar to coarse cotton. Jiasiduo has it in a number of flavors, which cost 40 yuan per package.

You'll also find other popular snacks like fenglisu, a traditional pineapple cake (58 yuan for 240 grams); shachajiang, a traditional barbecue sauce (15 yuan for 127 grams); and handmade rice-noodle (41 yuan for 600 grams).

The store recommends its brown-sugar wheat biscuit (43.50 yuan for 500 grams). "Brown sugar does not taste very sweet and is healthier," a salesgirl said, comparing it to white sugar. This snack is ideal for students or office workers who seldom have time for breakfast. Pair it with some fruit yoghurt for a healthy morning boost.

In Jiasiduo's frozen section you can find hot-pot ingredients like beef, tripe, pork and shrimp, which cost 32 yuan for half a kilogram. Most of its frozen food is produced locally.

One shelf holds huge, transparent handmade saponin soaps (61 yuan), suitable for the hair and body, and for washing delicacies.

Some items in the store are available on Taobao at better deals, so don't say *Beijing Today* did not warn you.



Pineapple cake, 58 yuan for 240 grams



Sweet potato balls, 13 yuan



Herbal jelly mix, 46 yuan for 15 packets

**Jiasiduo - Houxiandaicheng**  
Where: 5A-107 Houxiandaicheng, Baiziwan Lu, Chaoyang District  
Open: 9 am - 10 pm  
Tel: 8776 5163

**Jiasiduo - Jiangtai**  
Where: Building 4, Shangye Jie, Jiangtai Lu, Chaoyang District  
Open: 9 am - 10 pm  
Tel: 5135 7745

**Jiasiduo - Yayuncun**  
Where: 102-2 Jia 11, Yiyuan, Anhui Bei Li, Chaoyang District  
Open: 9 am - 10 pm  
Tel: 6497 7725  
Web: jiasiduo.cn



Almond tea, one of the most popular Taiwan dessert drinks

Photos by Huang Xiao /CFP



Modern South Korean steam rooms are becoming popular in Beijing.

CFP Photo

## Korean steam room for better skin and figure

By Annie Wei

South Korean TV dramas frequently show public bathhouses - a place where the female lead character socializes with her friends, chatting or sharing snacks with a towel wrapped around their heads.

In South Korea, bathhouses are venues for socializing. Some are luxurious while others are plain, but all have common features: a sauna and steam room, sleeping area, massage room, small restaurant, smoking room, workout equipment and Internet cafe.

Only experience will fully reveal a Korean bathhouse's charm. Luckily, there are quite a few in Maizidian. The most popular are those with steam rooms, which promote health and beauty in a visit of 30 to 45 minutes.

The steam rooms, which have temperatures of no less than 60 C, were designed to promote sweating. They supposedly help flush toxins from the body, relieve arthritic pain and aid in weight loss. After a session, expect a good night's rest and your skin to become smoother and more radiant the next week.

During a survey of Maizidian, we discovered a new beauty salon with a steam room exclusively for women. The steam room is small and can accommodate a maximum of four people lying on the brick floor. The salon staff is friendly and a steam bath costs a reasonable 58 yuan. The price includes the use of towels and a locker.

Here are some tips for first timers: shower before you go in, not after. A steam bath opens your pores and you should first give them time to close. Find a comfortable room to relax and let your body shake off the effects of the heat.

In the steam room, drink as much water as you can because the body can get easily dehydrated under such high temperatures. If you're in danger of becoming a steam addict, make sure you limit your visits to two or three times a week, and 45 minutes per visit. People with low blood pressure should avoid using it.

Use high-quality beauty products after a steam bath. The skin more easily absorbs nutrition when the pores are open.

**Xuanmei**

Where: Behind Huakang Hotel, Zhaoying Bei Li, Maizidian, Chaoyang District  
Open: 10 am - 10 pm  
Tel: 6591 8158





Padma Chumig dessert, 38 yuan

### Great for health

Padma Chumig has been around since 2005 but only in recent months has it drawn attention: that's because it used to be a private spa for local government officials.

Waiters and waitresses, all from Tibet and resplendent in their traditional clothing, greet guests as they enter. The place is filled with soothing Tibetan decorations.

The ingredients the restaurant uses are all-natural and free of chemicals, pollutants or dyes, the manager Wang Hong said.

"More importantly, the materials, such as saffron, preserve health," she said, adding that to ensure the quality of their raw materials, they ship most of them from the Tibetan highlands.

Saffron, an orange spice grown in the region, is believed to stimulate circulation, promote healthy hair and increase female fertility. Padma Chumig mixes it in both dishes and teas (40 yuan).

The main ingredients of the restaurant's "health-preservation" meals is aweto, which the Tibetan call "golden grass." It has remedial functions for diseases like cancer and can enhance the body's immune system; and matsutake, popular mushrooms in Japan and the US, also known as "the king of edible funguses." Carrageen and lily are also among the restaurant's top ingredients.

One of the house specialties is Qingke barley pizza (36 yuan), a vegetarian pizza made with Qingke barley, corn and sapodilla.

Padma Chumig's most popular item is a sweet dish named after the restaurant (38 yuan). Its main ingredient is lily, which helps clear heat from internal organs and soothes nerves, Wang said.

We only saw one meat dish on the menu: sheep ribs (68 yuan), which has nice and crunchy skin, although the meat is a little fatty. It comes with a light, traditional Tibetan barbecue sauce.

If you come for a "health-preservation" meal but don't know what to order, fear not: there are set meals to choose from, such as "blood nourishing," "calm the nerve and ease gout," priced from 100 to 360 yuan.

### Tibetan herbal bath

After eating, customers can also enjoy a typical Tibetan medicinal bath in Padma Chumig's spa, which was opened by doctors who know both Western and Tibetan herbal medicine.

Tibetan herbal baths are an important part of local medicine. They are widely used to cure internal diseases, prevent illness and to keep the body in top condition.

The spa's forte are herbal therapies that promise to relieve aches and ailments. Treatments include 45-minute temperature-controlled foot baths (180 yuan) and 90-minute full-body massages (460 to 760 yuan).

In the full-body massage, the customer is asked to lie on a warm, herbal-brick bed after a bath. The herbal brick warms the body, especially in this cold season, and eliminates toxins from the skin through sweating.

Wang said Tibetan herbal baths also help people recover from minor illness and ailments such as rheumatism and gout.

Where: Diaoyutai Villa, 8 Xisanhuan Zhong Lu, Haidian District  
Open: 9 am – midnight  
Tel: 8802 8036, 8802 8038

# Taste of Tibetan medical culture

By Han Manman

Tibetan cuisine has gotten increasingly popular in Beijing as people become more curious about the mountainous region. Tibetan restaurants not only serve unique fare but offer an ambience infused with the region's rich culture and tradition.

Most people however think of Tibetan food as "rich and oily," like Sichuan and Indian cuisines. But a new Tibetan restaurant challenges that notion. Padma Chumig restaurant and spa offers fresh vegetarian dishes featuring wild herbs, with a cooking philosophy guided by ancient Tibetan therapeutic diet.



An array of Tibetan favorites

The restaurant's spa offers medicinal foot and body baths.  
Photos provided by Padma Chumig

A typical Tibetan mushroom dish for special order

## Other Tibetan restaurants

### Gesaer Zanganba – Tibetan temple staples

Gesaer specializes in rice mixed with ginseng, a local favorite, and tsampa yogurt, well-known for its fragrance. As an alternative, the restaurant also offers Nepalese food that includes Gesaer's only two fish dishes. For religious reasons, Tibetan cuisine has no fish dishes.

Where: F2, China Tibetan Medicine Spa Mansion, Beiyuan Lu, Beisihuan Asian Games Village, Chaoyang District

Open: 11 am – 10 pm  
Tel: 6496 4318

### Gesang Meiduo Restaurant – Homemade dishes

White yak is Gesang Meiduo's specialty meat. Fresh meat from 10-day-old lambs is also on its menu. Besides meat, various greens and sweet Qingke barley wine from Tibet are also worth a try. The relatively dull variety of yogurt is made up for by live Tibetan dance performances.

Where: Opposite the Canadian Embassy, Dongzhimen Wai Dajie, Dongcheng District  
Open: 10 am – 10:30 pm  
Tel: 6417 9269

### Makye Ame – Royal Tibetan dishes

One of the first Tibetan restaurants in Beijing, Makye Ame's improved Tibetan fare suits Beijingers' palates. It has a yogurt buffet during the Shoton Festival, the most important Tibetan festival held on the first day of the seventh month of the lunar calendar. Diners should also try its yogurt beverages like tsampa pellet yogurt and ginseng fruit yogurt.

Where: F2, Jinghuyuan Flat, 23 Baijiazhuang Dong Li, Chaoyang District

Tel: 6508 8986

Where: F2, Jia 11, Xiushui Nan Jie, Chaoyang District  
Tel: 6506 9616

Open: 11:30 am – 11:30 pm

### Qomolangma Hotel Restaurant: Traditional Tibetan dishes

This hotel restaurant features traditional Tibetan dishes such as sweet Qingke barley wine, butter tea, yak and tsampa cakes.

Where: Qomolangma Hotel Beijing, 149 Gulou Xi Dajie, Xicheng District

Open: 11 am – 10 pm

Tel: 6401 8822 ext. 2828 and 2826

# Two cities collaborate on modern dance

By He Jianwei

Modern dancers from Hong Kong and the mainland will present over the weekend two debut works under the Hong Kong: Beijing Dance Platform, a program that aims to strengthen collaboration and exchange between the two groups.

Hong Kong's City Contemporary Dance Company (CCDC) and BeijingDance/LDTX will perform tonight *As If to Nothing*, created by Sang Jijia, a choreographer and former CCDC dancer, in celebration of the troupe's 30th anniversary.

Born to a Tibetan family in Gansu Province and raised as a shepherd, Sang is the first Tibetan to become a professional modern dancer. Before joining CCDC in 1999, he was a dancer and choreographer at the Guangdong Modern Dance Company for six years.

He created *As If to Nothing* after his apprenticeship with William Forsythe, an American dancer and resident choreographer of the Forsythe Company in

Frankfurt am Main, Hessen, Germany. The piece examines the passage of time through a stream of memories, featuring exquisite designs of movement vocabulary Sang learned in Germany.

*Between Lines*, to be presented Sunday, is choreographed by LDTX's Li Hanzhong and Ma Bo. The duo of 15 years has been praised for their recognizably strong, sleek, and defiant style.

In their new piece, Li and Ma

sculpt movement set to a peaceful score and framed by a fantasy stage design. The choreographers veer away from their typical sharp, athletic movements and focus on the dancers' response to the music.

Through the Hong Kong: Beijing Dance Platform, CCDC and LDTX will have regular opportunities to collaborate and present their works in Beijing and Hong Kong each year. "Our commitment is to support, nur-

ture and develop modern dance in China," Willy Tsao, artistic director of CCDC, said.

## As If to Nothing

When: January 8, 7:30 pm

## Between Lines

When: January 10, 7:30 pm

Where: PLA Theater, 60 Deshengmen Nei Dajie (southeast corner of Jishuitan Qiao), Xicheng District

Admission: 100 yuan, 150 yuan, 50 yuan for students  
Tel: 6406 8888



Photo provided by BeijingDance/LDTX

## Upcoming

### Movie

#### To Be or Not to Be

Where: MoBox Books Life, 288 Chengfu Lu, Haidian District  
When: 7 pm  
Admission: Free (Spend at least 10 yuan on a drink)  
Tel: 8261 8538

## Stage in February

### Concert

#### New Year's Ode to Joy – Song Fei Erhu Recital

Where: Concert Hall of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: February 2, 7:30 pm

Admission: 80-580 yuan

Tel: 6655 0000

### Lü Siqing Violin Recital

Where: Concert Hall of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: February 26,

7:30 pm

Admission: 80-500 yuan

Tel: 6655 0000

### Dance

#### Sound of Yunnan

Where: Poly Theater, 14 Dongzhimen Nan Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: February 3-5,

7:30 pm

Admission: 180-1,280 yuan

Tel: 6551 8058

#### Lar Lubovitch Dance Company China Premiere – Mixed Bill I

Where: Theater of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: February 3-6,

7:30 pm

Admission: 80-580 yuan

Tel: 6655 0000

#### The Lady of the Camellias Ballet

Where: Opera House of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: February 3-8,

7:30 pm

Admission: 180-1,080 yuan

Tel: 6655 0000

#### Irish Tap Dance Riverdance Beijing Tour 2010

Where: Beijing Exhibition Theater, 135 Xizhimen Wai Dajie, Xicheng District

When: February 5-11,

7:30 pm

Admission: 180-2,000 yuan

Tel: 6831 6633

#### Celtic Legends – Irish Tap Dance

Where: Poly Theater, 14 Dongzhimen Nan Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: February 6-8,

7:30 pm

Admission: 80-880 yuan

Tel: 6551 8058

#### Sleeping Beauty, Nutcracker and Swan Lake by the Russian National Ballet Theater

Where: Poly Theater, 14 Dongzhimen Nan Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: February 16-20,

7:30 pm

Admission: 50-1,000 yuan

Tel: 6551 8058

(By Jackie Zhang)

## 5 Friday, January 8

### Exhibition Persisting in His Own Opinion 2009-2010

Where: O Gallery, Room 2F, B2 West Building, 751 Power Square, 798 Art District, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until January 26, daily except Monday, 10 am – 6 pm

Admission: Free  
Tel: 8459 9676



### Teenage Story – Shen Dapeng Solo Exhibition

Where: Yan Club Arts Center, 798 Art District, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until January 15, daily, 10:30 am – 6 pm  
Admission: Free  
Tel: 5978 9172

### Movie

#### The Ring of Rainbow Flower

Where: Blend Coffee, 1354 Building 13, Jianwai SOHO West Zone, 39 Dongsanhuan Zhong Lu, Chaoyang District

When: 7 pm  
Admission: Free  
Tel: 5869 5030

### Nightlife

#### An Jinghao Ballads

Where: Weibozhiyan Club, Room 2308, 3/F North Building, SOHO Shangdu, 8 Dongdaqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: 8:30 pm  
Admission: 40 yuan  
Tel: 5900 0969

### Sing for China

Where: Yugongyishan, 3-2 Zhangzizhong Lu, Dongcheng District

When: 9 pm  
Admission: 60 yuan  
Tel: 6404 2711

## 6 Saturday, January 9

### Exhibition Memories of Central Asia – Western Influences on Textiles along the Silk Road, 4th - 9th Centuries

Where: Arthur M. Sackler Museum of Art and Archeology, Peking University, 5 Yiheyuan Lu, Haidian District  
When: Until January 10, 9 am – 4:30 pm  
Admission: Free  
Tel: 6275 1667



### Time is not Melancholic

Where: Renjian Siji Cafe, 1/F, Building 11, Dongshengyuan (300 meters

south of Wudaokou subway station), Haidian District

When: Until January 27, daily, 10 am – late  
Admission: Free  
Tel: 6263 4282

### Movie

#### Disorder

Where: 5/F, Wenjin Hotel, Tsinghua Science Park, Haidian District

When: 4:30 pm  
Admission: Free  
Tel: 6252 5566

### Nightlife

#### Sunny Days in Yunnan

Where: Weibozhiyan Club, Room 2308, 3/F North Building, SOHO Shangdu, 8 Dongdaqiao Lu, Chaoyang District  
When: 8 pm  
Admission: 40 yuan  
Tel: 5900 0969

#### Triumph! The Year of The Ox

Where: Yugongyishan, 3-2 Zhangzizhong Lu, Dongcheng District

When: 9 pm  
Admission: 50 yuan  
Tel: 6404 2711

## Sunday, January 10

### Exhibition Certain Uncertain – Zhao Liang Solo Exhibition

Where: 9 Art Space, 798 Art District, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until January 12, daily except Monday, 10 am – 6 pm  
Admission: Free  
Tel: 8459 9663

### Mise-en-scene

Where: OffiCina, 798 Art District, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until January 31, daily

except Monday, 11 am – 6 pm  
Admission: Free  
Tel: 5978 9462

### Nightlife



### Powell Young

Where: Yugongyishan, 3-2

Zhangzizhong Lu, Dongcheng District

When: 9 pm  
Admission: 60 yuan  
Tel: 6404 2711

### Beautiful Relatives

Where: Mao Livehouse, 111 Gulou Dong Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: 8:30 pm  
Admission: 50 yuan  
Tel: 6586 0065 ext. 8213

### Movie

#### Cafe Muller – Pina Bausch Video and Film Works

Where: Ullens Center for



Contemporary Art (UCCA), 798 Art District, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: 7 pm  
Admission: 15 yuan, 10 yuan for students  
Tel: 8459 9269



# Blue light the next eye killer

By He Jianwei

A major meteorological observatory in the southern suburbs recorded a daily snowfall of 10 millimeters on Sunday morning, the largest amount in one day since 1951.

It is a great opportunity to enjoy the snow, but outdoor play carries a risk of exposure to irritating blue light.

In the 1990s, there was no evidence that blue light could hurt the eyes. But scientists have found new evidence proving that blue light damages the retina and — with a long enough exposure — may even cause blindness.



CFP Photo

## How light damages eyes

All light is a form of energy. When your eyes absorb light, it creates heat or chemical reactions in the tissue. These reactions can cause permanent damage if the eye's natural ability to heal itself is overwhelmed.

Different parts of the eye absorb different kinds of light.

Ultraviolet (UV) rays are absorbed by

the cornea and lens and cannot irradiate on the retina. UV is considered the biggest danger for the eye because its rays carry so much energy. It has long been known that UV can cause or exacerbate several diseases that affect the eye or its supporting structures.

But blue light, the visible blue portion of the color spectrum, has its own dangers.

It is seen in its strongest forms in flash-light emissions and the sun. The intense glare of light reflecting off snow or water contains blue light, and may prevent eyes from focusing clearly.

If visible light is too bright or intense, or if you stare directly at the sun, even briefly, the retina can be damaged, causing permanent loss of vision.

## Evidence shows blue a danger

Scientists have found that routine exposure to blue light over many years may age the retina and increase the risk of blindness in the elderly.

"Because blue light hits the retina directly, it has become a secret cause of blindness," Zhang Chun, a professor at Peking University Eye Center (PUEC), said. The results of his six-month investigation of blue light radiation's effect on the eyes were announced last month.

The experiments were conducted on a white mouse. The white mouse stayed in a dark box for 24 hours at first, then was exposed to a box of blue light for seven or eight hours and then returned to the dark box.

"We designed a box with stripes. If the mouse has no reaction when we whirled the box, it showed there was no damage on its eyes," Zhang said. Over six months they found evidence of damage.

"Long periods of exposure will cause age-related macular degeneration (AMD) in the eyes, which is a leading eye disease. According to the WHO's statistics, 8.7 percent of all cases of blindness are caused by AMD. One in six Americans between the ages of 55 and 64 already has signs of AMD, and 15 percent of Chinese people over the age of 50 already have it. The figure grows every year," he said.

## Children at greater risk

Children under the age of 10 are most susceptible to blue light damage.

Statistics show 70 to 80 percent of all blue light directly hits the retinas of infants. From ages 2 to 10, this falls to 60 to 70 percent.

It is good for children to be exposed to sunlight

everyday, because it aids the absorption of vitamin D. But parents should ensure their children's eyes are protected.

The professor said the ideal time for sun exposure is 7 to 8 am for a period of 30 minutes. Sun hats can help prevent radiation from irritating the eyes.

## Minimizing the risks

"Wearing sunglasses makes sense. It is the easiest way to protect the eyes from damaging blue light," he said.

Normal sunglasses only filter 96 to 98 percent of the UV spectrum (280 to 400 nanometers). Blue light has a wavelength of 450 to 495 nanometers.

Zhang and his colleagues designed a laboratory experiment to test how new lenses

materials could filter out blue light.

"The new lenses not only prevent 100 percent of UV rays, but also 90 percent of blue light," he said. "You should wear sunglasses when you are out in the bright sunlight to avoiding exposure, especially from 10 am to 4 pm when the sun's rays are strongest."

Another way to give your eyes a boost

is with vitamin C, E and lutein, found in green leafy vegetables, such as spinach and kale, and employed as an antioxidant and for blue light absorption.

"Many Europeans and Americans who worry about blue light damage take vitamins and lutein pills. But the pupils will get yellow when people take those pills for a long time," he said.

# Lost history and art on eave tiles

By Charles Zhu

If you've visited the Forbidden City, its Hall of Great Harmony in particular, did you notice the carved tiles lined in a circle or semicircle on the eaves of the royal yellow, palatial glazed-tile roofs? These are called *wadang*, or eave tiles, designed to protect buildings' wooden beams and beautify their facade.

The tiles are a testimony to the extraordinarily meticulous attention ancient people paid to the details of their architecture. The small ornaments received much favor and attention from the Qin Dynasty (221-206 BC) through the Qing (1644-1911).

The oldest eave tiles unearthed were discovered on Jishan Mountain, in Shaanxi Province's Fufeng County, the birthplace of the Western Zhou Dynasty (1046-256 BC). They were plain, semicircular tiles, a few in double-ring patterns. The firing of eave tiles in pottery kilns was perfected during the late Spring and Autumn Period (770-476 BC).

## Depict everyday life

Eave tiles of the Warring States Period (475-221 BC) depicted everyday life in the seven warring states. For instance, those discovered in Zibo, the site of the State of Qi and today's Shandong Province, were semicircular with double animal patterns; those from Yixian, the site of the State of Yan and today's Hebei Province, were carved with *taotie*, a ferocious animal of ancient legend and popular motif in bronze. The circular tiles discovered in Fengxiang County, Shaanxi, the location of the State of Qin, also portrayed animals.

In June and July 2009, archaeologists dug up in Beijing's Fangshan District 11 pieces of semicircular eave tiles from the late Warring States Period, uncovered during a subway construction. This was 3 kilometers away from the Heigutai Ruins where eave tiles from the same period were found in the 1950s and helped archaeologists locate the capital of the State of Yan, today's Beijing.

## Narrative patterns

Eave tiles evolved from semicircular to circular between Western Zhou and Han (206 BC-AD 220). The earlier Qin tiles featured patterns of clouds, mountains, animals, insects and grass. Tigers, leopards and deer were portrayed as forceful, while swallows, geese and phoenixes exuded warmth. Insects such as bees, butterflies and crickets came to life under the hands of Qin craftsmen. Images usually came in twos or fours and may have been meant to scare away ghosts or evil spirits.

An eave tile with a diameter of 61 centimeters and a height of 48 centimeters, depicting a perfect symmetry of two *kui*, a legendary dragon-like animal, was unearthed in a Qin palace ruin north of the Qinsihuang mausoleum in Xi'an. The biggest eave tile ever discovered, it has been nicknamed the "king of eave tiles" and is on display at the Shaanxi Museum of History. Archaeologists have also found a Qin tile inscribed with the line, "the Pre-Qin is rising like a giant dragon, with virtues comparable to those of the ancient saints."

## Of good luck, ownership and majesty

The skill to produce such eave tiles reached its peak in the Han Dynasty. In addition to the Qin's patterns, the Han tiles, which were paler than the Qin's, carried pictures of winged tigers and insects, and characters in seal style. Words were usually propitious sayings, such as good wishes for the homeowner: "happiness that will never perish," "as high as the sky," "longevity for thousands of springs and autumns." Numbers ranged from one to 12 – strangely, omitting 11.

Some of the characters denoted the name of an imperial palace, official mansion or mausoleum as a way of declaring ownership. Such eave tiles may be as big as 18.5 centimeters in diameter, with the largest on record being 22 centimeters. Calligraphy was done in straight as well as twisted strokes, tight as well as loose, square as well as circular, free as well as well-controlled forms.

The most outstanding and precious Han tiles were those with the patterns of four gods: the Azure Dragon, White Tiger, Vermillion Bird and Black Tortoise, which represent the four directions in Taoist canon. They were carved with fluent artistry, symbolizing the majesty of that age.

Continued on page 21...



Eave tiles carved with human faces sold in Panjiayuan Market  
CFP Photo



Many buildings in the Summer Palace feature exquisite eave tiles.



A brick wall in Sanyanjing Hutong topped with eave tiles



CFP Photo



Eave tiles on an old temple



A Beijing courtyard home with eave tiles

Photos by Jason Wang



... continued from page 20

### Historical data

Xiayang Museum in Shaanxi houses a 16-centimeter in diameter tile, the only one unearthed from a tomb in Beiyuan County, north of the mausoleum of Emperor Gaozu of Han, or Liu Bang, the dynasty's founder. The tile is inscribed with the words "the Hun ruler is invested with power from the heaven," from which historians infer that there was peace between the Han court and the nomadic Huns for 60 to 70 years.

Another tile, 17 centimeters in diameter and etched with "Han Bing Tian Xia" (the Han conquers the heaven and earth), was testimony to the rise of Liu Bang. It was dug up in Liyang, Lindong County, Shaanxi, in 1951 and is on display at the Palace Museum in Beijing.

The eave tiles of the Kingdom of Wei (220-265) and the Jin (256-420) and Southern and Northern (420-589) dynasties were much smaller and mainly focused on cloud patterns. The number of tiles inscribed with characters sharply dropped compared with the Han's. However, there were still some vernacular inscriptions like "Long live the Great Zhao State," "Protect the offspring" and "Long life, wealth and rank." Some tiles from the Southern and Northern Dynasties were found in the Gaojuli Ruins in Jilin Province, which borders North Korea.

### Creative innovations

During the Tang Dynasty (618-907), the tiles were made in black, yellow, green and blue for the first time, and featured lotus patterns as Buddhism permeated everyday life. Some were unearthed on the western Silk Road in Xinjiang Province and the southern Silk Road in Nanzhao, today's Yunnan Province, in addition to the Yellow and Yangtze River basins.

Tiles with a diameter of 13 centimeters, discovered in Minhe County, Qinghai Province, contained an image of a standing boy, with eyes wide open and hands across his chest, flanked by two angels. It exudes artistic simplicity and naivety, with marked outlandish influences. Tiles with characters virtually went extinct in Tang.

The next dynasty, the Song (960-1279), replaced lotus patterns with animal faces. They spread as far as the Qidan, Nurzhen and Xixia

tribes in the north. Those of the last two dynasties, the Ming (1368-1644) and Qing, favored images of flying dragons. Metal eave tiles came into being during this period; some were in bronze or iron, some gilded, telling of the luxury and extravagant life of the wealthy.

### As art collection

People began to study and collect eave tiles during the Northern Song Dynasty (960-1127). From the mid Qing, they were regarded as antiques, becoming popular collectibles in late Qing and the early Republic of China period (1911-1949). In the last 20 years, eave tiles have become hot art objects, fetching exorbitant amounts on the market.

It is interesting to note that the emblem of the prestigious Peking University, "Beida," designed by Lu Xun, one of the literary giants of modern China, was inscribed in a classic seal style that exudes calligraphic excellence. It symbolizes a man's spine, the designer's hope that the university's graduates would one day become the salt of the earth and advance China's democracy and progress.

Through millennia, eave tiles have served artistic as well as practical purposes: they provide a link between art and life, as well as provide important and treasured clues to the study of history, geography, politics, economics and culture, and the evolution of calligraphy and visual art.



Many courtyard residences in Beijing feature eave tiles.

Photos by Jason Wang

### Tips

A tourist in Beijing who is interested in eave tiles may go to the Palace Museum to see the real tiles on Taihe Hall (the Hall of Great Harmony) and the treasured Han eave tile "Han Bing Tian Xia" on display inside. Other places where you may see eave tiles include the Confucian Temple, the Gongwangfu (the Residence of Prince Gong of the Qing Dynasty), The Working People's Palace (formerly the royal sacrificial temple) on the eastern wing of the Forbidden City and Beihai Park.

Beijing's antique markets at Liulichang near Hepingmen in Xuanwu District and Panjiayuan on East Third Ring Road in Chaoyang District offer visitors copies of ancient eave tiles with Qin- and Han-era patterns. The ornaments are encased in exquisite glass boxes and cost from 600 to 4,000 yuan. You may also get printed paper copies of eave-tile patterns in black and red, which cost less than 100 yuan apiece.

Eave tiles on the Lama Temple's pagoda

CFP Photo

## Ski Resort



### Beijing Huaibei International Ski Resort

Beijing Huaibei International Ski Resort is one of the largest outdoor base camps in Beijing. It operates throughout the year and has skiing, ice climbing, rock climbing, field survival training, professional development training, orienteering, Great Wall crossing, paintball and fishing. It has three cable lifts, six drag lifts, one snow tube run and seven ski runs ranked beginner through expert.

Where: 548 Hefangkou Cun, Huaibei Zhen, Huairou District

Open: 8:30 am – 9:30 pm

Cost: 150 yuan two hours (weekend), 160 yuan two hours (holiday)

### Beijing Yuyang International Ski Resort

Beijing Yuyang International Ski Resort has 12 high-tech snow machines and two snow groomers. Its seven runs are divided up for beginners, intermediate and advanced skiers. It also has two sledding trails, one motorcycle trail and one snow park with wave slopes. The rental hall has 7,000 sets of ski equipment and 6,000 ski suits, 600 of which are for children.

Where: 688 Dawangwu Cun, Donggaocun Zhen, Pinggu District

Open: 8:30 am – 10 pm

Cost: 100 yuan two hours (weekend), 120 yuan two hours (holiday)

Tel: 5869 3355 or 6990 8855

Web: yuyangski.com.cn

### Beijing Nanshan Ski Resort

Beijing Nanshan Ski Resort is 62 kilometers from Wanghe Bridge in Beijing. It has 7,000 sets of ski equipment, 21 ski runs for beginners to experts, a snow park and a brand-new-off piste tree run. Its quality snow machines and groomers ensure the runs stay in perfect condition. Two high-speed quads, one two-man chair lift, 13 tow ropes and platter lifts give the resort a lift capacity of 8,960 skiers and snowboarders per hour.

### Beijing Shijinglong Ski Resort

Beijing Shijinglong Ski Resort is 80 kilometers from downtown and can accommodate 5,000 skiers. Experts can try the advanced run, which has a vertical drop of 300 meters. Intermediate skiers can try the 28-degree chute. The resort also has a bunny hill and 5,000 sets of equipment. A new Snow Board Paradise is available for boarding fans. Let go of the day's tension at the snow sauna and hot spring bath.

Where: Zhongyangfang Cun, Zhangshanying Zhen, Yanqing Country

Open: 8 am – 5 pm

Cost: 120 yuan four hours (weekend), two hours (holiday)

Tel: 6919 9043

Web: sjlski.com

Where: Shengshuitou Cun, Henan-zhai Zhen, Miyun Country

Open: 9 am – 5:30 pm

Cost: 150 yuan two hours (weekend), 160 yuan two hours (holiday)

Tel: 8909 1909

Web: nanshanski.com

### Beijing Jundushan Ski Resort

The immense Beijing Jundushan Ski Resort is about 30 kilometers from the city proper. The primary, intermediate and advanced runs offer more than 4,000 meters of courses. The two intermediate runs have 20 gradients, and the advanced run drops 247 meters on a 40-degree angle. Two elevated passenger ropeways, one ski carpet, eight surface lifts and 3,100 sets of imported equipment are available.

Where: 588 Zhenshun Cun, Cuicun Zhen, Changping District

Open: 8 am – 10 pm

Cost: 150 yuan two hours (weekend), 160 yuan two hours (holiday)

Tel: 6072 5888

Web: bjski.com.cn

### Beijing Lianhuashan Ski Resort

This ski resort is one of Beijing's largest. It is 30 kilometers from Capital International Airport and half a kilometer from Bus 918's Liangshan stop on the Shunping Highway. It has seven runs, five drag lifts and one glider cable with a four-person chairlift.

Where: 288 Liangshan Dong Lu, Zhang Zhen, Shunyi District

Open: 8:30 am – 10 pm

Cost: 140 yuan two hours (weekend), 160 yuan two hours (holiday)

Tel: 6148 8111 or 6148 8222

Web: bjlhsski.com

### Beijing Badaling Ski Resort

This resort is near the west end of the Badaling Great Wall. It is home to the capital's longest motorcycle run and has two 800-meter-long primary runs, one 600-meter-long intermediate run, one 800-meter-long advanced run with a drop height of 160 meters and two flying disk runs. Enjoy the beautiful scen-

ery and entertainment like dog sleds, bungee jumping, snow saunas and DIY ice sculpture.

Where: 66 Badaling Development Zone, Badaling Zhen, Yanqing Country

Open: 8:30 am – 10 pm

Cost: 100 yuan two hours (weekend), 120 yuan two hours (holiday)

Tel: 6912 9922 or 6912 9966

Web: bdlskiing.com

### Beijing Yunfoshan Ski Resort

Beijing Yunfoshan Ski Resort is surrounded by mountains. It has one expert ski run, three intermediate runs, four primary runs, one motorcycle run and one cross-country trail for snowmobilers. The resort has 10 snow machines, two groomers, two cableways, nine drag lifts and four ropeways. The advanced sightseeing cable cars can move 3,500 passengers per hour and the rental hall has equipment for 3,000 skiers. Sleighs and dog sleds are also available.

Where: Xiwengzhuang Zhen, Miyun Country

Open: 8:30 am – 5 pm

Cost: 140 yuan two hours (weekend & holiday)

Tel: 8903 2601 or 2602

Web: yunfoshan.com

### Beijing Snow World Ski Resort

Beijing Snow World Ski Resort is one of the closest ski resorts to the city. It has six runs including one single board track. As many as 1,800 skiers can ski at the same time. Its primary and intermediate runs are designed to enable skiers to progress while having fun. The advanced runs are for experts who want to hone their skills. The large-scale snow ground is a paradise for kids who want to have a snowball fight or make a snowman.

Where: Xiaogongmen Cun, Shisanling Zhen, Changping District

Open: 8:30 am – 5 pm

Cost: 140 yuan two hours (weekend)

Tel: 8976 1886 or 1889

Web: bjxueshijie.com

### Beijing Yunju Ski Resort

Beijing Yunju Ski Resort is 60 kilometers out of the city and has eight ski runs for skiers of different levels. The Chuyun and Feixian meet the domestic standards for expert ski runs with a peak gradient of 25 degrees. The resort has two four-seated ropeways, six drag lifts and 2,500 sets of equipment.

Where: Caijiakou Cun, Zhangfang Zhen, Fangshan District

Open: 8:30 am – 5 pm

Cost: 140 yuan two hours (weekend), 160 yuan two hours (holiday)

Tel: 6138 9800 or 6133 8589

Web: yjski.com

## Hotel



### Festive party package

Book your Year End Party for 50 or more at an affordable 288 yuan per head. Enjoy perks like a voucher for one night in a Deluxe Room with free breakfast and a bottle of imported wine.

Where: Crown Plaza Beijing Zhongguancun, 106 Zhichun Lu, Haidian District

When: Until February 28

Tel: 5993 8888 ext. 2316 or 2317

### Millennium Hotels a Top 10 leader

For his outstanding leadership and excellent achievements in the China hotel industry, Charles Lai, Millennium Hotels and Resorts' vice president of sales and marketing in Greater China, was awarded the 2009 International Hotel Industry Top 10 Leaders Award by Hotel Professional Executive at the International Hotel Investment Forum 2009 in Jinan, China.

## Tourism



### Stone Bowl Shark Fin

Warm up with a rich bowl of Stone Bowl Shark Fin specially prepared for the season. Celebrate good health, wealth and success with friends and family this Chinese New Year.

Where: Pearl, Beijing Marriott Hotel City Wall, 7 Jianguomen Nan Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: Until February 14, 11:30 am – 2:30 pm (lunch), 5:30-10 pm (dinner)

Cost: 99 yuan, subject to 15 percent service charge

Tel: 5811 8200

## Aviation

### Access KrisFlyer on the go with "SIA Mobile"

Singapore Airlines customers can now use their mobile phones to book flights and access selected KrisFlyer services using "SIA Mobile." Services include viewing of statements and checking miles earned and redeemed.

SIA Mobile booking and KrisFlyer services are the latest additions to SIA Mobile check-in. Customers may select seats immediately after making a SIA Mobile booking or during their SIA Mobile check-in anytime between two and 48 hours prior to flight departure.

(By Sun Feng)



**Chinglish story**

This column focuses on Chinglish mistakes in our daily life. If you have any experiences to share, send them to Wang Yu at wangyu2008@ynet.com.

# Penny's double life

By Zhang Dongya

A childhood friend, Penny, works for a small foreign-trade company in Changsha, Hunan Province. She is married and leads a relaxed life, but she says her routine can get tedious so she travels whenever she can. It's a good thing she has a kind and understanding husband.

She recently called me, saying she got an exciting part-time job as a "hotel experienter," which requires her to stay in different hotels around the country and share her experiences online.

From Monday to Friday, she goes to the office; on weekends, she turns into a nosy traveler, going in and around inexpensive inns, midrange hotels and five-star resorts.

She is a great travel writer, because her pieces are always imbued with warmth, insight and good humor no matter where she ends up.

Last week, she got a chance to stay in a newly-opened hotel in Beijing, so we made plans to meet up. After she checked in, I met her at the hotel bar together with Leonard, a friend from the US who is traveling around China and who wanted to quiz Penny about her discoveries.

Penny entertained us with inside stories about the hotel industry. When I asked about her trade job, her smile disappeared. She said travel writing has dampened her enthusiasm for her full-time job, and she was beginning to dread business.

"If you're not careful, people around you will think you're leading a double life," I teased her, hoping that would lift her spirits.

Penny paused, then nodded. But she said she would not quit either job.

While we were waiting for a cab, Leonard couldn't stop talking about the hotel stories that Penny shared and



he said she had a great job.

"I actually envy her double life," I said wistfully.

Leonard was quiet for a moment. "I know what you're saying," he said. "But do you know that 'double life' in most situations means having an extramarital affair?"

Of course I did not know! I recalled

Penny's reaction when I said that to her; I suppose she knew my mistake. To be sure, I called her on the phone once I got home to check whether she had anything going on outside her marriage.

Turns out Penny knew the idiom. And no, the only "double life" she was leading was one related to work.

**Blacklist**

This is a column of words or phrases commonly misused by Chinese speakers. If you're planning to be an English teacher, reporter or employee of a multinational company, then watch out for this page each week.

**1. She is diligent, where he is lazy.**

**Professor Zhu Shida (ZS):** On the surface of it, you might think that the conjunction of "where" is wrongly used. You might think that it should be "whereas" in place of "where." Of course, it is perfectly right to say: She is diligent whereas he is lazy. However, "where" sometimes can replace "whereas" as the conjunction that means on the contrary; but, while. For instance, Some children like school, whereas others do not. We can perfectly change it into: Some children like school, where others do not. Another example: Some hardy ones went swimming in the icy lake where others were huddling in their cotton-padded clothes in the heated house.

**Native speaker Steven Sander**

**(SS):** This is correct, though I would prefer "while" to avoid any confusion of location. It could be easily misinterpreted to mean "she" is diligent only in the physical locations where "he" is lazy.

**2. The book is the closest you will come to know.**

**ZS:** This sentence is fairly tricky for English learners. What's wrong with it? Let's first try to separate its parts and analyze them. The book is one which will provide you almost all the information you wish to know. So, it is: The book is the closest you will come to. Obviously, the sign "to" is an adverb and is not an infinitive sign. So, the sentence should be: The book is the closest you will come to knowing. This is very similar with this pattern: I look forward to seeing you soon. Another example: The structure of the electron is the closest the scientists have come to knowing.

**SS:** Use the -ing form, not the infinitive, when forming adverbs: The book is the closest you will come to knowing. And please try to ensure that should you ever pen such a sentence, you answer the question of What one is coming to know?

**3. Highs and lows**

**ZS:** Generally, it is used as an adverbial phrase. For instance, He searched high and low for his pen. Then, can we say the sample phrase in its plural form is wrong? As a matter of fact, it is not wrong. For it can also be used as a noun phrase, meaning all strata of society. For instance, The policy has covered all, bringing benefits to the highs and lows. It is similar with the phrase high and mighty which can serve as an adjective as well as a noun. For instance, It is a high-and-mighty attitude. Please see it when it serves as a noun: The high and mighty in Washington has enormous political sway.

**SS:** If you are unsure whether it should be "high or low" or "highs and lows," try this trick: does the sentence still make sense when you replace this fragment with "ups and downs"?

**Chinglish on the way**

This column aims to identify Chinglish in public areas. If you see any Chinglish signs, please send a picture of it to wangyu2008@ynet.com together with your name and address.

## Please throw the wastes into the wastebasket

By Tiffany Tan

How you interpret this sign depends on where you are and what you're doing. If you're in the restroom squatting, and this bright red sign is almost poking you in the eye, imagine what you'll think.

I like to think of myself as an old Chinglish hand, so I know the sign is saying to throw toilet paper, sanitary napkins and toilet-seat paper covers in the garbage bin. But being an old Chinglish hand, I also spot the outrageous in signs that



Photo by Tiffany Tan

appear "normal" – things you and I would be better off ignoring.

So let's go back to the restroom. You're squatting in front of this bright red sign and you read "waste." Won't your mind suddenly be filled with an image of the solid stuff that comes out of your body – and how you're supposed to throw it in the wastebasket?

"Trash" or "garbage" would have been better choices. I had to work hard to erase that unfavorable picture from my head. Now it's your turn.



## Scene 1

(Dorian Gray joins his first party in London and meets Lord Henry Wotton.)

**Henry Wotton (W):**  
Cigarette?

**Dorian Gray (G):** No, thank you.

**W:** I find a cigarette to be the perfect pleasure. It is exquisite and leaves one unsatisfied. You're Kelso's grandson.

**G:** Yes. Did you know him?

**W:** I met him once. It was enough to give a cheer last month when he rasped his last sour breath. One assumes you inherited the withered old goat's (1) estate? Being a little orphan isn't all bad. "An earnest young man with a beautiful nature," according to Agatha. I'd pictured some freckled country oaf in ghostly dress. I see I was only half right. It could be worse. Gladys Allonby's been dressed for her 14th birthday ever since her 40th. If Radley spent less time in church and more at his tailor's, he might not so resemble a badly-bound hymn book. Are you sure you won't take a cigarette? I get them directly from Cairo.

**Basil Hallward (H):** I see you've met our charming host.

**G:** Hm?

**H:** Pay no attention to anything he tells you.

**W:** How rude. Henry Wotton. Victoria, my wife. My aunt, you know.

**Lady Radley:** Oh, I'm so glad you've met. You might learn some manners from this boy.

**Victoria:** I've found some more guests for you to insult.

**W:** I knew I kept her for something. I do hope our paths cross again, Mr. Gray.

**G:** Thank you for the cigarette ...

## Movie of the week

This movie could hardly please Oscar Wilde, author of the original novel, but audiences unfamiliar with the book may enjoy *Dorian Gray* – especially for its art and costumes.

The movie is a crowd pleaser. Ben Barnes is on screen almost every second from opening to closing credits and is frighteningly brilliant as the titular character. Barnes and Colin Firth carry the film. Its art and set direction surpass all other period pieces. Roger Pratt's cinematography puts the viewer into the hazy London setting surrounded by stunning costumes. The movie captures perfectly the deplorable conditions of the urban poor and the debauchery of the moneyed class.

## Synopsis

A naive young man, a lovelorn artist, a corruptible lord and a deal with the Devil: in Victorian London, the rich and infamous party to their own peril.

Dorian Gray, fresh-faced and innocent, arrives in London to move into his inheritance. Almost immediately he falls under the influence of the amoral and calculating Lord Henry Wotton, who leads a life of debauchery and violence. Over many years Gray stays as young-looking as ever, while a portrait painted when he arrived grows old, reflecting his increasing excesses. Eventually the picture, now secreted in his attic, becomes almost hideous to behold. When true love finally enters his life he realizes he must guard his secret at all costs.



## Vocabulary

1. **old goat:** a cranky old man
2. **fiddle with:** to manipulate nervously
3. **be along:** follow
4. **poppycock:** nonsense
5. **hocus-pocus:** witchcraft

(By Wang Yu)

## Scene 2

(Wotton and Hallward take Gray to a London working-class pub.)

**W:** There's no shame in pleasure, Mr. Gray. Man just wants to be happy. But society wants him to be good. And when he's good, Man is rarely happy. But when he's happy, he's always good. You do want to be good, don't you, Mr. Gray, and happy?

(Gray eyes the whore beside a man in the pub's corner.)

**G:** Isn't there a price to pay for that sort of business?

**W:** She's quite affordable.

**G:** But what I was asking was about the effect on ...

**W:** On what?

**G:** Well, on one's soul.

**W:** One's soul? This is my church. With this dram, right now, I nail my soul to the Devil's altar.

**H:** You'll never meet a more eloquent philosopher of pure folly. Come on, Dorian. It's time we showed you what we've made.

**G:** Really?

**W:** The boy hasn't finished his gin. Go and fiddle with (2) your back-ground. We'll be along (3) shortly



## Scene 3

(The painting of Dorian Gray is finished.)

**W:** Well, Basil ... it's quite the best thing you've done. You'll be the talk of the town. Both of you. Speak up, boy. You'll hurt his feelings.

**G:** Is that really how I look? It's just so ... lifelike.

**W:** Better than life. He'll always look like that. You, Mr. Gray, I'm afraid will not. In time, mother nature will come a very poor second to father Basil.

**H:** Some things are precious for not lasting.

**W:** Poppycock (4). We wither and scar because the gods are cruel and hateful.

**G:** Perhaps I should nail my soul to the Devil's altar.

**W:** And remain as you are? Fair trade.

**H:** How about another gin instead?

**W:** All that **hocus-pocus** (5), endless conjurations, books bound in infant skin, pentacles of fire, drinking the blood of virgins. Dorian wouldn't really barter his soul. Would you, Dorian? Would you?

**G:** Yes.